THE Great Corruption OF Subtile Self,

Discovered, and driven from it's Lurking-places and Starting-holes.

AND

The contrary Grace, *Self-Denyal* commended, as an indispensably necessary requisite to the Acceptable and Successfull performance of all Commanded-Duties, and as notably fitting for taking up of the Cross, and following Christ.

In Seven Sermons

By Master *JAMES DURHAM*, late Minister of the Gospel in *Glasgow*.

EDINBURGH,
Printed by the *Heir* of *Andrew Anderson*, Printer to the King's most excellent *Majesty*,
ANNO DOM. 1686.

THE Epistle Dedicatory.

To the Right Honourable and very noble Ladies, my Lady Dutches of Rothes, *and her Graces Eldest Daughter the Countess of* Rothes, *who Christianly ambitions it, as her greatest honour in following the Lord, to tread in the foot-steps of her living noble Mother, and of her deceast Grand-Mother, the Countess of* Crafurd, *Sister-German to the two Illustrious Princes,* James *and* William *late Dukes of* Hamilton, *and of Her great Grand-Mother my Lady* Boid, *all three eminent Paterns of Piety in their day.*

Most Noble *Ladies.*

THE incomprehensibly Great and Glorious *JEHOVAH*, the Almighty Creator of Heaven and Earth, Who is, and was, and is to come, the First, and the Last, *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginning and the Ending, the beginning of all without beginning, and the end to which all tends without end, who hath eternally his being only

only, and altogether, in and from himſelf, without Participation with, or Derivation from any, other, and from whom, as the firſt Fountain, and Original Beeing, the Sole-ſelf-being, and Beeing of Beeings, all the Creatures Inanimat, Vegetative, Senſitive, and Rational, whether Angels or Men, are but derivated, and borrowed Bits of Beeing, in compariſon with whom, they are but up-ſtarts of yeſter-day, and (as it were) Time-nothings, *hath* (as it is highly rational, juſt, equal, and congruous he ſhould) *made all things for himſelf*; and hath in a more ſpecial manner, formed, and new-made his own choſen and peculiar People *for himſelf, that they might ſhew forth his praiſe*; and *hath bought them with a price, and redeemed them, not with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold from their vain converſation, but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a Lamb without blemiſh, and without ſpot, ſlain from the foundation of the world*; who are therefore *not their own*, but infinitly oblidged *to glorifie God both in their ſpirits and bodies which are Gods*; none of whom beyond all living, ought *to live to himſelf, nor die to himſelf*, but living and dying ought to be *the Lords*; ſince *the Lord Chriſt both died and roſe, and revived, that he might* in a peculiar manner, *be Lord of them both living and dead*; It becometh them *from the conſtraining power of the love of Chriſt to judge thus, that they ſhould not live to themſelves, but unto him, who* out of love *died for them*, and to endeavour through Grace to be in a capacity, each of them, for him, and her ſelf, to ſay, *I am crucified with Chriſt, nevertheleſs I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me, and the life that I now live in the fleſh,*

is by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me; and, *to me to live is Christ*, The very End and Scope that I propose to my self, in desiring life with any of the conveniencies, accommodations and comforts thereof, is the Honour and Glory of Jesus Christ: as of all persons in the world, it is most unworthy of them, and worst becoming them, to be inordinat Self-lovers, Self-pleasures, or Self-seekers, so it is highly suitable for them (being singularly and signally oblidged thereto) *to deny themselves and to take up their cross and follow him*: and yet, notwithstanding all these mighty, matchless, and marvelous obligations, they, even they, alas! are frequently, and not altogether without success, insinuated upon, by deceitful corrupt *Self*, that immixeth with their best, and most Spirituall Duties, and in part spoileth them; they are the more called and concerned, watchfully to guard against it, that it doth, as a thin, subtile, spiritual humour very secretly, and insensibly diffuse it self thorow the whole Mass and Body of the Duties of Religion, and by it's venemous quality, in less, or more, tinctures, and vitiats them all; The most soveraign antidot against which poison, and the most powerfull extracter, and sucker out of it, is sincere Love to Jesus Christ, flowing from the Lively Faith of his Love.

Your Noble *Ladyships*, as his genuine, and kindly Disciples, have been a considerable time trained up in his School, and been by him the great Teacher, taken much pains upon (I hope with good success) that ye might be made to learn well, to take out, and be Spiritually Perqueer in that first great high and difficult Lesson

of

of Christian Religion, *Self-denyal* (which, as it is an absolutely necessary, and indispensably requisite to the whole of it, so it is universally influential on the same, and more particularly, on patient, pleasant and cheerful taking up, and bearing Christs Cross after him;) as otherwise so by the late great breaches that the Holy Lord hath thought good to make, and that within a very short space of time, upon several of your Noble near and dear Relations; thereby at once, laying very heavy loads of Crosses and Afflictions upon you, and graciously instructing you, with a strong hand *to deny your selves*, that ye may christianly bear them, and be made observable proficients by them; taking his own infinit and all-sufficient self, to fill the empty rooms of these deceast dear Relations, which all the world cannot do (which is your great and highly valuable mercy, whatever strangers to him may think to the contrary) yet he that hath filled Heaven and Earth can easily do it, O! blessed design; let him, with your most cordial allowance, and at your most earnest desires drive it vigorously, and successfully about you; that when others of his People shall hear and *see your ways and doings, they may be comforted, and made to say, verily God hath not done in vain*, not without precious and blessed Fruit, *all that he hath done*, to yonder Noble *Ladies*: which very excellent and singularly usefull Grace of *Self denyall* is notably cleared and commended in these few following *Sermons*; as the contrary corruption of slie and subtile *Self* is by diligent search found out, and chased from it's many lurking-places, and starting holes, and the *hue and cry* raised after it, as a common and notorious

rious Thief, that is alwayes ſecretly and ſacri-
giouſly filſhing, pilfering, purloining and ſteal-
ing ſomewhat from us, that is Gods due in all
hat we do; which therefore on the *cry* we
would earneſtly and cloſly purſue, as one of his
reateſt Enemies, which ſaucily and malapertly
preſums to rival it with him, and lifteth it ſelf up
to ſit on his Throne, and to bring him down to
ſtand at it's Foot-ſtool, the very Image (as it
were) *of jealouſy provocking to jealouſy*, making us
ſo far as it prevails, to be groſs Idolaters, and alſo
one of our own greateſt Enemies, whatever be it's
plauſible pretence of friendſhip to us, and in
whatever handſome-like dreſs and ſhape (for it
can, in a manner, nimbly turn it ſelf into all
ſhapes) it officiouſly offereth to commend it
ſelf to us; it (as it were) eats much of the fat,
and drinks much of the ſweet of our Sacrifices of
praiſes, prayers, and of all our other Duties; it
pitifully impoveriſheth us, when we might be
rich, and ſeem to be ſo, and maketh us, when
we appear to be very fruitful, to be almoſt ut-
terly *empty vines*, becauſe, by it's means, a great
part *of our fruit* is *brought forth to our ſelves*. Now
heartily deſiring that theſe few very ſearching,
but very ſweetly ſavouring *Sermons* of the ſingu-
larly Self-denyed long ſince deceaſed Author,
may come along to all the Readers of them, and
to your *Ladyſhips* in particular, with a full bleſſing;
and hopeing that you will not offend at my ad-
venturing to ſhreud them under the umbrage of
your noble Names, I am.

Moſt Noble *Ladies*
Your Graces, and Your *Ladyſhips*
Servant in the Goſpel.
J. C.

SERMON I.

Matth. 16. 24. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto his diſciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his Croſs and follow me.*

THeſe Words contain a main and moſt profitable point of Doctrine, which our bleſſed Lord Jeſus taught his Diſciples before his ſuffering; he had been telling them, that he was to go up to *Jeruſalem*, and what things he was to meet with, and ſuffer there; This diſcourſe had a very ſtrange-like aſpect upon them, they could not away with it, nor digeſt it, that their Lord and Maſter ſhould ſuffer, and be thus reproachfully dealt with; *Peter* therefore raſhly, and inconſiderately takes him aſide, and preſumptuouſly arrogats to himſelf, the liberty to rebuke him, and to offer him (as he for the time thought) a more ſafe advice; *Be it far from thee, Lord* (ſayeth he) *this ſhall not be unto thee*; he will by no means have him go to *Jeruſalem*, as judging it unſafe and unſeaſonable at ſuch a time; for which preſumption, (as having a tendencie to defeat the grand deſign of his coming into the World, to *Peters* own & the unſpeakably great prejudice of many others;) after the Lord had rebuked him ſharply, even at a higher rate of ſeverity, than he did for his thrice denying him; he doth on this occaſion, deliver a general Doctrine concerning the neceſſity of their, and of all his Diſciples,

denying themſelves, and taking up their Croſs without which they could not be his Diſciples nor follow him, who eminently denyed himſelf and took up the Croſs for their ſakes; and who would have them to follow him in the ſame way.

There are *Four* very conſiderable things in the Words. 1. The great Work and Buſineſs, that all Chriſts Diſciples and Believers in him are called to, which is to come after him, and to follow him; *If any man* (ſaith he) *will come after me, and follow me.* 2*ly.* The great let and obſtruction that lyeth in the way of ready, reſolute and cheerfull following of Chriſt; and that is mans own ſelf, or ſelfiſhneſs, which, if it be not removed, laid by, and overcome, in ſome meaſure, he cannot come after Chriſt, nor follow him; *Let him* (ſaith he) *deny himſelf, and follow me*; 3*ly.* The great Duty that lyes on all the followers of Chriſt, or that whereby they are fitted, and helped to follow him; *viz.* Right bearing of the Croſs; *Let him* (ſayes he) *take up his croſs and follow me.* 4*ly* There is the great neceſſity of this Doctrine. *Let him* (ſayeth he) *deny himſelf, and take up his croſs*; *Luke* hath it, *Chap.* 14. *v.* 27. *whoſoever beareth not his Croſs, cannot be my diſciple*; it muſt be, it is indiſpenſably neceſſary.

But before I come to theſe main things in the Text, I ſhall ſpeak a little to *Three* circumſtances ſet down therein, which will make way for clearing the Purpoſe. 1. Who gives out this Doctrine? It is Jeſus; *Then ſaid Jeſus.* 2*ly.* To whom is it given? *unto his diſciples.* 3*ly.* When, at what time, and on what occaſion was it given?

Then

then, *viz.* after, and upon occasion of *Peters* carnal advice suggested to him, in the for-going Words. A word to each of these shortly.

As for the *First*; Considering Christ, as the Great Propher, and Teacher of his People, not only in general, Teaching what Doctrines be in his Wisdom, judged needfull for them, but as Teaching his *Disciples*, this Point of Doctrine in particular: which he leaves with them, when he is about to leave them; we may thence, *Observe*, That *the great Scope of Christs teaching, is, to bring men from themselves to Him*: If we joyn the two Parts of the *verse* together, this will be clear, If (sayes the Lord) *any man will come after me, he must deny himself, and follow me*; It is in effect the end, not only of his Doctrine, but of his dying, and rysing again; So the Apostle speaking of Christs dying, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. Sayes; *If one died for all, then were all dead; That henceforth these who live, should not live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.* 'Tis held forth as the end of Christs dying, and of *Pauls* preaching him: This implyes these *three* things, That Christs end in teaching, is, 1. To draw men from themselves, as their highest end, in what they do, and to bring them to set the Lord always before them, and to design his Glory, as the principal and ultimat end of all their actions; that they may seek to have him (as it were) *increasing*, though they should *decrease*; as *John* speaks, *Chap.* 3. *v.* 30. To debase, bring down, and lay themselves low, and to exalt and set him very high on his own Throne. 2. To draw them from resting on, from trusting in, and leaning to themselves; to resting on,

truſting in, and leaning to himſelf only; *we h*
(ſayeth the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 1. 9. *The ſente*
of death in our ſelves, that we ſhould not truſt
our ſelves, but in him who raiſeth the dead; a
ſayeth *Solomon*, *Prov.* 28. 25. *He who truſts*
his own heart is a fool; This then is a ſeco
Branch of Chriſts drift in the Doctrine of t
Goſpel, even to draw men from reſting
themſelves for Salvation, or any thing true
Good, and to bring them to himſelf, that th
may reſt on him alone for all things. 3*ly.*
draw men from delighting in themſelves, or
any thing in themſelves, and to bring them ſin
ly to delight in him; for as men have a dire
act(ſo to ſpeak) in looking to themſelves, ſo th
have a reflex act in delighting in themſelve
or in ſome excellency they fancie to have foun
in themſelves; That men may be brought fro
theſe broken Ciſterns, and from all truſt and d
light in themſelves, or in any thing in the cre
tures, and may come to Him, the fountain
living waters, in whom only quietneſs and re
to Souls, is moſt certainly to be found; is th
great drift and deſign of his Doctrine; as is ver
clear, *Iſai.* 55. 1, 2, 3. and elſewhere.

The *uſes* are, 1. To teach us, to take we
with, and to ſtudy to take out this Leſſon of Sel
denial, to be weaned from Self, and from a
things in Self; It's amongſt Chriſts laſt Leſſo
to his Diſciples, when he is about (as it were
to make his Teſtament, and Laſt-Will; it woul
therefore be the better, and more exactly learn
ed. 2*ly.* To ſhew you what is indeed Chriſ
Doctrine, and what is not; more eſpecially,
ſuch times of Tentation and Tryall, as theſe ar

herein several Points of Doctrine come to be
ntroverted, and called in question; You
ould try, if it aimeth at this, as it's great Scope,
draw you from making your self your end,
nd from trusting, and delighting in your Self;
the exalting of him, to trusting and delight-
g in him; whatever *Doctrine* is not consonant
ith, or is contrary to this, is certainly not
om Christ; with whatever specious, and plau-
ble pretences it may be palliated and varnished
ver: whatsoever it be, if it draw thee not
om, but to thy Self; to idolize thy Self, or
ny thing in thy Self; It is not (I say) from
hrist; but as it draws thee from thy Self, and
rives thee to debase thy Self, and to exalt him,
nd to give him his own room and place, it is
f God, it is of Christ. 3*ly*. To let you know,
ow ye profit in Christs School, what progress
e make in his Gospel, and what good ye have
ot of it; in so far as ye make progress, in de-
ying and debasing your selves, and in exalting,
nd setting up of Christ very high, in so far have
e profited, and got good by the Gospel: This
ppears eminently in *Paul*, *Gal.* 2. *v.* 19, 20.
through the law (sayeth he) *I am dead to the
law, that I might live unto God; I am crucified
with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but
Christ liveth in me.* His estimation of himself is
uite gone, his own Righteousness is slain, he is
ead to the Law, in that respect, that he may
ive to God. This was through Grace, the ef-
fect of Gods Law on him, that he was brought
very low in his own esteem, even crucified and
dead to himself, and Christ set up in him, and
extolled very high: and to the same purpose,

Gal. 6. v. 14. He layes, *God forbid that I shou glory in any thing, save in the cross of our Lord J Jus Christ, whereby the world is crucified to me, a I unto the world.* He was a greatly mortifie man, his corruptions, in some respect, as muc slain and put to death, as if he had been out the World; there was neither strength n beauty in them, to draw him from delighting Christ; he saw no worth in them, to be much as a tentation to him; Nay Christ himse hes such room in his heart, that the very Cro of Christ, and his reproach bulk more in his ey than all the world beside; I fear there is mor of this in notion and discourse, than in experi ence and practice amongst us; however ye woul know, that coming to Christ, or following hi in profession only, is not the kindly fruit of th Gospel; but it is the bringing of Self low, an the setting up of Christ high in your hearts, an so the coming to him, and following of him rea ly and sincerely; which is the genuine frui thereof.

For the 2*d.* To whom is this Doctrine give out? It is to *his Disciples*; *Mark Chap. 8. v* 34 Takes in the *Multitude* with the *Disciples*; h taught them all this Lesson; Hence *Observe, Tha there is none, neither ignorant, nor more knowing neither believer, nor unbeliever, but they have need t be taught this Lesson of Self-denyall*; We need no stand to prove it, even *Peter* hes need of it, wh by his unsanctified, and unseasonable advice of fered to the Lord, *was an offence to him*, an thereby bewrayed much sinfull Selfishness; Th rest of the Disciples, and the Multitude have need of it, so deeply rooted is this principle o

Self

Self in all; and who hath not need of it?

The *First use*, serves for humbling of us, when even the Disciples of Christ have need to be taught this Lesson of Self-denyal, we sure have much more, who are not so well acquainted with the way of following Christ as they were; and therefore have much reason to fear that this evil of Selfishness is much prevalent amongst us.

The *2d. use*, Serves, in a word, to exhort all, whatever their Condition, and Degree, or proficiency in Christianity be, to study this Lesson well; it is profitable to all, not only beginners, but those, who are further advanced, all stand greatly in need of it.

As for the *3d.* to wit; The time and occasion, at, and on which he taught this great Lesson; It was *Then*, which we may look upon several ways. 1. As it is knit with the temtation, that he saw *Peter* led away with; for he knew the natural propensity of them all unto it. Whence, *Observe, That oftentimes we may read and discern our own corruptions in the discoveries of the corruptions of others*; Yea, it is profitable for us so to do. Christ holds not here at the rebuking of *Peter*; but knowing that all had need of the same Lesson, he accordingly teacheth them all; This were a far more profitable way of looking upon the falls and failings of others, to take Warning, and receive Instruction to our selves from them, than to be rigidly censuring them, or to be vainly overvaluing our selves, or superciliously undervaluing others, because of them; *They were broken off because of unbelief*, (saith the Apostle, concerning the unbelieving *Jewes*

to the believing *Gentiles*) *and thou ſtandeſt by faith, be not high minded, but fear*; and, ſaith he, 1 *Cor.* 10. 12. *Let him that thinketh that he ſtandeth take heed leaſt he fall.* Or 2*dly.* We may look on it thus, That when Chriſt ſees a Tentation take hold on *Peter*, he takes occaſion therefrom, to break the force of it, and to beat and bear it down, leaſt it take hold of, and infect the reſt, by it's Contagion. Whence, *Obſerve, That whoever would reſiſt any tentation, and more eſpecially tentations to Self-ſeeking, would do it in the entry, and at the very firſt*; When any Idol of Self ſets up it's head, we would inſtantly knock it down; and indeed if we look to our way, it will be found, that this one ſpecial mean, by which tentations become ſo ſtrong, ſo prevalent; and almoſt unconquerable, that we do not take them at the beginning, and endeavour not to cruſh them at their very firſt appearing; when one Devil comes in, and is not quickly caſt out, he readily brings in ſeven worſe: Therefore, as ye would not be maſtered with, and troden under foot, by your corruption, and by *the Law that is in your members*, give not way to it in the leaſt, but ſet your ſelf in the ſtrength of the Lord, to oppoſe and bear it down, in the firſt riſings of it; That Precept *Principiis obſta*, is moſt neceſſary to be practiſed here, even above, or beyond what it is in any other caſe in the world. Or, 3*dly.* We may conſider it, as it looks to our Lords high Indignation at the nature and kind of the Tentation, as being plaiſtered over with fair words, and ſpecious ſhews of reſpect to him; Which Indignation is manifeſted by theſe very

ſharp

sharp words, *Get thee behind me Satan*; on which follows the Exhortation, *Then said he*, &c. Whence *Observe, That there is no sort of sin, and more especially no sort of selfishness, that Christ abhorres more than that which is palliated with pretended respect to him*: Albeit *Peter* offered this advice to his Master, from some kind of respect to him; yet we will not find a more severe check, and sad rebuke given to him, or to any other, than that which he gets here, because selfishness was in his counsel, and the professed respect was but carnal and byassed; wherein he prefers, either his own, or his Masters bodily welfare, to the Will and Honour of God.

For clearing the *Doctrine* yet a little further, ye may take it up in these *two* Branches. 1. *That there is a selfishness, even among Christs Disciples, that comes in, and covers it self with the shew of respect to Christ.* 2*ly*. *That there is no selfishness more dangerous, and more detested, and abhorred of God than this sort of selfishness.* I shall instance the subtility, and danger of this sin of Selfishness, shreuding it self under pretended respect to Christ shortly, in some particulars. It comes in, one of *two* ways; either when men do that which is right, as to the matter; and yet it's but Self that they are seeking; or when they do that which is wrong; and yet they cover it with profest respect to God: There are several kinds of both; *First*, We may see it in things lawful, and first, in these, Men will have a kind of Zeal for God, and yet be seeking themselves; as it was with *Jehu*, who boasts, that he is zealous for God, and yet in truth, it was mostly for his Kingdom. 2*ly*. As Selfishness vents it self,

under the pretence of Zeal, ſo under th
pretence of honouring God, when yet i
is only, or mainly reſpect to Mens Selves, tha
is ſought after by that pretended reſpect to God:
what greater reſpect could readily have been pu
upon Chriſt, when ſo deſpiſed by the Rulers,
than to offer to make him a King? as the people
did, *John* 6. and yet, ſayes he to them, *Ye ſeek
me not, becauſe ye ſaw the miracles, but becauſe ye
did eat of the loaves, and were filled*; That is, ye
ſeek me not out of reſpect to me, as God, but
becauſe ye conceive, ye would have a good life
under me; for ye think, if I were your King,
ye would have an eaſie life of it, and that ye
needed not plow, nor ſow, nor work otherways for your Bread; This is a ſubtile ſort of
Self-ſeeking, when men profeſs, and pretend
to ſeek to have Chriſt Great, and yet in the
meantime, there main deſign is to make themſelves great. 3*ly*. Selfiſhneſs vents it ſelf, in
following that which is Duty on the matter, under the pretence of doing it, in obedience to a
Command; and yet it is not really the Command that puts on to it, but Self, or Selfiſh reſpect;
as the Lord chargeth his profeſſing People, *Zach.
7. v.* 5, 6. *When ye did faſt, did ye at all faſt
unto me? did ye not do it unto your ſelves*: And,
Matth. 6. v. 5. &c. Chriſt charges this on the
Phariſees, That they gave Almes, Faſted, and
made Long-Prayers, as out of obedience to Gods
Command; when, in the mean time, all was
done *to be ſeen of men*. *Secondly*. Selfiſhneſs comes
in, and vents it ſelf in things unlawful, by covering them with a profeſſed reſpect to Gods honour; as we ſee it was with *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 15.
Who, when he is challenged by *Samuel*, for ſpar-

ing the best of the Cattel, and Sheep, sayeth, *These are to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God*; But sayeth *Samuel*, *v.* 22. *Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams; for rebellion is as the sin of witch-craft, and stubbornness, as iniquity and idolatry:* There is nothing more abominable in the sight of God, than to shroud a selfish end and design, under the specious pretext of honouring him; But more of this afterward.

The *First use* of this serves for warning, to take good heed to our selves, when things look, and promise fair, we would try and examine well from what root they spring, and on what bottom they stand; for many things fair in appearance, may be rotten and corrupt at the root and bottom; many things may look like respect to, and zeal for God, which yet he will reject, and cast, as proceeding from no true zeal, nor respect to him: Therefore in all things, but more especially, in publick matters, do not think, that the honesting and plaistering over of a thing with pretended respect to Christ, is enough to make it passe current: As for instance, amongst the men that have invaded us, there are two things much talked of, and cryed up, and they have indeed a fair outward shew, *viz.* The Interest of Christ, and the Interest of his People, and this they pretend to be the main design of their actings, That Christs Kingdom may be advanced, and that his People may be the only great men of the World, and the only Rulers of the Kingdom; and this once being pretended as the end and design, they are apt to conclude, that there is no mids or mean that

can

can come readily wrong to compasse it by: But if we try this by the Rule, it is to be feared, that there is very little of Christs honour, or the true good of his People in the matter; indeed, when men keeping themselves in their own stations, are found to have abilities for, and Gods call to Rule and Govern, they are, in that case, to imbrace that Imployment; but while men pretend to exalt Christ, and the interest of his People, take heed that it be not Self-seeking, or seeking to make themselves Great, which is really their chiefest aim, and that they might have a better life of it: The Interest of the People of God, as they are the People of God, never leads them to seek after Greatness, in respect of earthly Priviledges and Dignities; Therefore, look well to your steps, and upon what principles and grounds ye move toward such an end; and withall, take heed, that in prosecuting this end, ye out-shoot not your selves, that ye go not beyond your line, and that ye move not without your own Sphear; Interest in Christ, and true respect to his interest, will never prompt, nor nor advise you to such exorbitant stretches, nor warrand you in the breach of any of his Rules: The passions of men *work not the righteousnesse of God.*

The 2*d*. *use*, serves to be as a mark and evidence, whereby we may try, what sort of duties, actions and worship will stand before God: none but such as are singly for God, and not for our selves, as the main end of them; Let the action be never so good, if it's end be selfie, the more Gods honour be pretended; it is the more abominable in his sight; for clearing this *use* a-

little,

little, ye may take some marks of difference, whereby ye shall know, when, albeit men cover, and palliat their actions with pretexts of Gods honour, yet Self is their great end. 1. Selfishness predominantly venting it self in any duty, alters and changes, as it were, the very *nature* of the Duty or Service; In somuch as that which is Spiritual Service, when done to Christ, is turned into carnal, and meer external service, when done to *Self*; Thus, those, who (*John* 6.) sought for their own selfish ends, to have Christ made a King, would have turned Christs Spiritual Kingdom into an earthly and worldly Kingdom for their own advantage; It is an evil token, when respect to Christ is vented carnally in some thing that smells strong of respect to the great Idol of Self. 2*ly*. As Selfishness creeping in, changeth some waythe nature of the Service, so it changeth the *manner* and way of serving him; There is an unlikeness to him in the way of the service, while Christ is only pretended, and self indeed intended O! but the manner be unlike him; as we may see in the Disciples, *Luke* 9. *v.* 54. When the *Samaritans* refused to give Christ lodging, *Shall we*, (say they) *desire fire to come down from heaven to consume them, as Elias did*? Was *Elias* thus honoured, and shall not our Master be as much honoured as he? *ye know not* (sayes our meek Lord Jesus to them) what Spirit ye are of; My Spirit (as if he had said) is not firie, as yours is;) *The wrath of man fulfills not the righteousness of God*: When there is bitterness, even against wicked men, look well that it rise not more from some selfish end or passion, and from respect to your selves, than

then from real respect to Christ, however it may be much pretended; for true zeal never vents it self in carnal revenge, or bitterness. 3*ly*. It is unlike Christ in the *means*; when Christs honour is not singly intended, and when men take not Christs own way to do his own work; they readily do not light upon, or, are not led into his means to attain that end; or though the end be good, yet they come not to their end, in Christs way, and by his means; and be assured, when the mids cannot abide the trial, it's a shreud evidence, that it's not Christ that we are seeking, but our selves; *we must not do ill, that good may come of it*; though the end be approven, if the mids be not approven also, Christ will cast such service. But I come now to the *Four* great things in the Text.

The *First* whereof is, The great task or work that Believers are called to, and it is, *to come after Christ, and to follow him*: *If any man* (sayeth he) *will come after me, and follow me.* We shall shortly explain this, to make way for what we aim at, The Words then suppose, That a man who is a Disciple of, or a Believer in Christ, hath Christ before him, and is following after him, for clearing whereof, take this *Doctrine*, *That a Beltevers great work and task is, in all things wherein he is proposed as a Patern, to be a follower of Christ, and runner after him*; There are several general Scriptur-exhortations that hold furth this, as these, and such like; *Ephes.* 5. 1. *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children*, and so followers of Christ; 1 *Cor.* 4. 16. *Be ye followers of me*; compared with *Chap.* 11. 1. *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ*: But that this

this may be the more clear, I shall speak a little to these three things. 1. In what respects Believers are to look to Christ, in following him. 2*ly*. What is this following of Christ? 3*ly*. What is opposite to following of Christ?

For the *First* of these, The Scripture holds out Christ in several respects, or under several considerations, which will help to clear, what it is to follow him: And 1. It holds him out, as the *End* and *Scope* that we should have before us, in all our Actions: So 2 *Cor.* 5. *v.* 15. We should *live to him that died for us*; or, as the *Mark* we aim at, in our Christian race; Thus *Paul* sayes, *Philip.* 3. 14. *I press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*; his design is to win Christ, to know him, and to enjoy him; he is restless till he be at him; So that following of Christ is a running and pursuing close and hard after him, without turning to the right or left hand, or looking back, till we be up at him, and fully apprehend him, as our Mark. 2*ly*. The Scripture holds him out, as the *Prize*, and we are to follow him, as one following after a Prize (as the Apostle sayes he did, *Philip.* 3. 14.) *even the prize of the high calling of God in Christ*; We are to follow him as our wages, and the reward of all our Service, and as the great mercy, that all Believers mind and long to obtain; I (sayes the Apostle, *Philip.* 3. 8.) *count all things but dung, that I may win Christ.* 3*ly*. The Scripture holds out Christ before us, as a *Patern* and Copple, that we are to conform our selves to, in all our Actions, and as the example that we should imitate; which is one of the main things aimed at in this place,

and

and thorow the Scripture, even to draw us to look on Christ in his Life, Carriage, Actions, Death and Sufferings; and to Imitate him; Christ also suffered for us (sayes *Peter*, 1 *Eph. Chap.* 2. *v.* 22. *Leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps*; And sayes the Lord, *John* 13. 10. *I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you*, Believers carriage should be a transumpt extract and double of Christ; *Learn of me* (sayeth he, *Matth.* 11. 29.) *for I am meek and lowly in heart*: We should prefer his will to our will, as he did the Fathers; being tender hearted, meek, lowly, humble, as he was, in suffering, to deny, and lay aside our selves, as he did, *&c.* 4*ly*. Christ Jesus is held out, as a *Master* and *Teacher*, and so we are to follow him, as one that teacheth us what to do; whether it be as a Teacher that Instructs, or as a Master that directs what to do. *Ye call me* (sayeth he, *John* 13. 13.) *Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am.* 5*ly*. He is held out to us as a *Leader*, or guide in our way; and so we are to follow him; *Behold*, (sayeth the Lord, *Isa.* 55. 4.) *I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.* 6*ly* He is set out as a *Captain* and *Commander*; so he is called, *Heb.* 10 *The captain of our salvation*, and *Isa.* 55. 4. a *Commander*; Souldiers take Orders from their Commanders, and must keep their Rank and File, and when they scale the Walls of a Town, and offer to take it by storm, they must follow their Commanders close at the back; even so should we follow Christ. 7*ly*. The Scripture sets out Christ as the *Shepherd* that cares for the Sheep, that walks upon, and feeds his

his People. *I am* (saves he; *John* 10.) *the good shepherd; and when he goes forth, his sheep follow him, v.* 4. Not only must they take their Directions from him, as a Commander, but they must keep neer his feet, hear what Lessons he gives out to them, and hide themselves under his shaddow, from them that come to trouble his flock. 8*ly.* He is held out to us as our *Fore-runner, Heb.* 6. 20. *whither the fore-runner is for us entered*; as our heavenly harbinger, he is gone to Heaven before us, to take up our lodging, to provide quarters for us; and we are called to have our conversation in Heaven, as he is exalted to Heaven, our conversation should be in Heaven also, *Colos.* 3. 1. and *Philip.* 3. 18. 9*ly.* He is held out to us as the *Author and finisher of our faith*, as he that works all our works in us, and for us, as he that must give us the Lesson, and understanding to take it up, make the way plain, and carry us thorow it; *Looking* (saves the Apostle. *Heb.* 12. 2. *unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith.* Giving him the trust of carrying us thorow, These *two* words bid us trust Christ with the beginning and perfecting of the work, & never to take our eye off from him.

For the *Second*, What this following is, 1. It will be the more clear by shewing you, what it is opposed unto. And first, it is opposed to mens taking of another way than Christ took, and to the taking of another Guide, or Leader than him; for whosoever follows a stranger, they follow not him, 2*ly.* It is opposed to mens turning of their backs on Christ; for following supposeth the setting of the face towards that which is followed; Therefore, *Heb.* 10. 38.

drawing

drawing back, is opposed to *believing*, or *living by faith*, which is nothing else but following of Christ. 3*ly*. It is opposed to sitting up; for such as stand still, or sit down in the way, though their face be someway towards Christ, yet they follow him not; *If thou wilt return, O Israel*, sayes the Lord, *Hos.* 4. 16. *return unto me.* Make not a half returning, do not halt, nor sit up in the way; for followers are going on, and running out the race. 4*ly*. It is opposed also to running before Christ, or making haste; for these go before him, that step out ere he open the door, or seek to go another way than by the living way into the Sanctuary, or most Holy; or take the Counsel and Direction of others; and do not wait upon his; as *Saul* did, we find also this fault in part in the Disciples, in their prescribing away to him to be avenged upon the *Samaritans*, and not waiting on his prescribing to them.

The *use* of it, in a word, serves, To exhort Believers, To consider what Relations Christ stands in to them, and in their Christian Walk to make use of them. 2*ly*. To try hereby what progress they make in their Christian Course and Walk: and 3*ly*. To study Christ well, and to confirm themselves to him; as their great *Patern*, *Example*, *Leader* and *Commander*, all along their Christian Walk.

SERMON.

SERMON II.

Matthew 16. 24. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

IT is not easie, but a matter of singular difficultie, sincerely and honestly to follow Christ; As is clear from the high and hard Duties which Our Lord calls for in these Words, as simply, and indispensably necessary to the following of Him, *viz.* That a man deny himself, and Willingly and Cheerfully take up his Cross.

In this part of the *Verse* (as we formerly shew) there are *Four* things contained. The 1. is the Great Work and Business that all that comes after Christ, or are Christs Disciples are called to; and that is, to *follow him.* 2*ly.* There is the great Obstruction that lyes in the way of this, or that hinders Believers in following of him; and that is a mans *own self*, or selfishness. 3*ly.* There are the great qualifications, or duties which are required in, and from Christs Disciples, in order to their following of him; they must *deny themselves*, and *take up their cross*, and so *follow him*; and these are helpful to one another, Self-denial helps to contented and chearfull closeing with the Cross; and that again proves greatly helpful to the following of Christ. 4*ly.* There is the great necessity of these qualifications, or duties, to all and every one that would

would follow Christ; they are so indispensably necessary, that there can be no following of him, without them; all that would follow him, must needs deny themselves, and take up their cross.

For making way to what we principally aim at, somewhat hath been spoken in short, to the *First* of these, and we shall not insist further on it, especially seing what respects the following of Christ may fall in afterward, amongst the Duties that are required of these that come after him.

I shall therefore come to the *Second* thing *viz.* The great Obstruction that hinders Believers in the following of Christ, whether we speak with respect to the matter, or manner of this full and comprehensive Dutie; which is (as we said) a mans Self, or selfishness. Hence,

Observe, That a mans own self, or selfishness is the great thing that obstructs Christs followers, and hinders them in the following of him; This is that which makes them stumble, and fall in their way, so that if it be not in some measure removed, and rolled out of the way, there can be no following of Christ: This is clearly supposed in these Words; for if Self did not obstruct in the following of Christ, he needed not have pressed this great Dutie of Self-denial, as necessary to the following of him: But that we may the better clear this *Doctrine*, we shall take it up in these *three* Branches, which are manifestly supposed, and implyed in the Words, and in the Doctrine. 1. That there is such a corruption as Self in, and among Christs own Disciples, and Followers; for to them he speaks, and on them, he presses this duty of self-denyal, supposing that they, even they had such a corruption in them

them, as Self, and might be too much swayed by it. 2*ly*. That this Corruption goes alongst with, and waits upon Believers, in their following of Christ; nay, alas! it steals in upon them, and twists it self in, into their most spirituall *Duties*; and therefore Christ knowing this, presses the study of Self-denial, in order to their right following of him, in the way of Duty. 3*ly*. That this Corruption (at least where it bears swey) is the great thing that obstructs, letts, and impeds Believers in their following of Christ, and in their Duties, and therefore when he is giving Direction, how people may get him followed, he first proposes the removal of *Self* out of the way, as the great thing that obstructs following of him.

For clearing and confirming of the *first* of these, *viz*. That there is such a Corruption as *Self* in, and among Christs own Disciples, and Followers; there are *three* things that we shal speak a little to. 1. What is to be understood here by a *Mans Self*, or what it is that we call Selfishness. 2*ly*. What makes it out, that this Corruption of Selfishness is in, and amongst Believers, or Christs followers. 3*ly* Why the Lord suffers Believers to be so much kept at under with such a gross Corruption.

For clearing of the *first* of these, *viz*. What is to be understood here, by a mans Self, or what it is that we call Selfishnesse, we shall offer these *four* things to be considered. 1. What useth to be called a Mans Self; In the General it comprehends what is in Man, whatsoever a man is of himself; but more particularly. 1. It is taken for that habitual Corruption of nature that

it

it is in all and every one, which the Apostle calls *Flesh*, *Rom.* 8. 8 *The old man*, *Ephes.* 4. 22. *The body of death*, *Rom.* 7. 24 And this is commonly called *sinfull or corrupt self.* 2*ly.* It is taken for a mans natural affection, and desire to his own being and well-being, for his natural desire to preserve himself, and his desire towards these things that tend thereunto, and to his well-being; for as the Apostle speaks, *Ephes.* 5. 29. *No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it, and cherisheth it*; And we find this affection to our selves, made the measure of our love to our neighbour; and therefore the Scripture says, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self*; This is called *naturall Self.* 3*ly.* It is taken for a mans Parts, Gifts, Moral Induements, Meekness, Patience, Fortitude, *&c.* Or his outward moral actions whereby he commends himself to others; Hence a man is said to *follow himself*, when he walks according to his own wisdom and counsell; and to *trust in himself*, 2 *Cor.* 1. 9. When he trusts in his own wisdom, strength, courage, moral blamelessness, or the like; This is called *morall self.* 4*ly.* It is taken for these Graces of of the Spirit, whereby a man is renewed after the image of God; and in this respect, a man is opposed to his own corrupt Self, *Rom.* 7. 20. *It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*, and *Gal.* 2. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*; And this may be called *Spirituall, Sanctified*, or *Renewed-Self*: now all these point at something habitual in the man; but when we say that Self obstructs in following of Christ; we understand it not simply, with respect to any of these last three, nay, not with respect to the

first

first, at least as more properly considered; for it is not the having of Grace, and moral Parts, or gifts of Wisdom and Learning, *&c.* Nor a mans natural affection, and desire to his own being, and well-being, that (considered in themselves) obstruct his following of Christ; but the mans undue estimation of these, and their bearing the great sway with him in his carriage: and though the corruption of nature does greatly obstruct the following of Christ, and is the bitter root, out from which the Selfishness we here speak of springs; yet it is someway distinct from it, I mean, from that habitual, and (to speak so) complex body of natural corruption in us, which (as we said) is commonly called *sinfull or corrupt self*; but that which we speak of, is a special propension and inclination in all men to miscarry, by an inordinate respect to themselves, and to these things that respect themselves. Consider, 2*ly*. That this Selfishness may be looked on, either more *generally*, or more *particularly*. 1. More *generally*, it may be looked on, as it goes thorow the whole conversation and actions of a man; and as it is in every man the same; for all men naturally have the same principle of Selfishness, or of inordinate respect to themselves, swaying them in the whole of their conversation and actions. 2*ly*. More *particularly*, it may be looked on as it runs in such and such a channel, and especially vents it self in this or that particular way, or towards such or such a particular sin, or idol; and in this respect it differs much amongst men; the Selfishness of one man venting more in one way, and towards one thing, and the Selfishness of another

man

man, venting more another way, and toward some other thing; and when we speak of Selfishness here, it is not of the last, but of the first of these that we mean; that is of that selfish propension, or inordinat respect to a mans Self that swayes a man in the whole of his conversation; and is the same in all men; whatever more special and particular wayes it has of venting itself amongst men: for though the sins and evils whereunto men are particularly addicted be diverse, yet the corruption that swayes to all these is one and the same. *Consider*, 3*ly*. That this inordinat respect to a mans Self, that swayes him in all his actions, and makes him miscarry in reference to himself, may be looked on again *two* wayes; either *first*, As it is opposed to the things of others, as when a man sees to his own things, and not to the things of another, and this is called *particularness*, or *particularity*, and is expressly prohibit by the Apostle, *Philip.* 2. 4. *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.* 2*ly*. As it is opposed to God, and the things of God (in which sense we principally speak of it here;) For, whereas a man should keep himself, and all that concerns himself in subordination to God, this inordinat respect to himself, makes him put himself, or something in or belonging to himself, out of the right place, or out of that place of subordination to God, that he should keep himself in; and makes him put himself in Gods place and room: So that from all this it may be clear, that by the Selfishness we here speak of, we are not simply to understand that habitual corruption of nature, or this, and that particular Lust,

that

at this or that man may be more peculiarly
dicted to, nor a mans natural affection, and
ire to himself; nor yet a mans parts, and
oral endewments; nor a mans Graces; but
at inordinat respect to a mans self; which is,
as we said) the same in all men naturally,
d which swayes a man in the whole of his con-
rsation, and makes a man put himself, or some-
ing in himself, in Gods place and room: and
us it is taken in the Scriptures, where *Living*
our self, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. *Seeking our selves, Jere-*
iah 45. 5. *and pleasing our selves, Rom.* 15. 1.
e spoken of mans self, especially, as these are
pposed unto *living*, to *seeking of* and *pleasing*
od; It is not this, or that act, but to be sway-
d from this principle of inordinat respect to
ur selves, all which intimat an inordinat respect
this or that act, or to any thing we do, or
eddle with; so as in all that we do, to live to
ur Selves, or to have our Selves before us, in
e whole tract of our way, as the great and last
d that we aim at, and as the great and chief
inciple, that we are swayed by.

That Self is thus to be understood in these
Words, is clear; for 1. The sin that Christ re-
kes *Peter* for, was not so much his love, either
his own, or his Masters precious life, simply,
it was his labouring to have Christ more sway-
d by respect to his life, than to his Duty. 2*ly*.
is clear, that when Christ sayes, *except a*
an deny himself, He means, except a man be
ead to every thing in himself, or that belongs
Self, when, and as it comes in competition
ith him, *he cannot be his disciple*; Therefore,
e find it commended in *Levi*, that he prefer-

red God and his Duty to Him, to all relatio nd
Deut. 33. *v.* 9. *He said unto his Father an nd*
his Mother, I have not seen him. neither did he ng
knowledge his Brethren, nor knew his own Chin
dren; and *Heb.* 11. 24, 25, 26. *Moses* gets g
honourable testimony, for his preferring of Chri rm
and his dutie to him, and to his People, to nd
the Honours, Pleasures, and Riches of *Pharao* ye
Court; and *Paul* sayes, 2 *Cor.* 5. 16. *He kne ord*
no man after the flesh. 3*ly*. Christ explains him
own meaning in the following words to the Te
while he sayes, *He that saves his life shal lose it*
he condemns not a natural affection to, nor
moderat care for the preservation of a mans life
but that inordinat respect to it, and care for
that obstructs duty and service to him, a
makes a man put his life out of the right place
and therefore, by a mans Self, or Selfishness
here, we understand (I say) that corruptio
whereby a man has such an inordinat estima
on of, or respect to himself, or any thing in, o
belonging to himself, as puts him, or it in th
place, or room of God, or, as puts the ma
Self uppermost, and makes all things subordin
to it. *Consider*, 4*ly*. For further clearing wha
Self is, these *Six* things, wherein the Scriptur
holds forth this sin, and wherein it vents o
shewes it self. 1. It vents it self, or kythes
making a mans Self the chief end of his actions
so that he lives to himself, and for himself, an
not to God, nor for God; and Self terminats a
his designs and endeavours; Thus it vented
Ephraim, who, *Hos.* 10. *v.* 1. is said, to be
empty vine, because, *He brought forth fruit to him*
self; that is selfishness, when all a mans study
an

tio nd care is to bring forth something to himself; and herein *Baruch* was guilty also, as that chal- he nge proves, *Jerem.* 45. 5. *Seekest thou great Ch ings for thy self? seek them not*; And compar- ets g 1 *Cor.* 2. 2. Where the Apostle sayes, *I de- hri rmined to know nothing among you, save Christ,* to *nd him crucified*, with 2 *Cor.* 4. *v.* 5. Where he ra yes, *we preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus the kne ord*; We find it clear, that a man who has any s hing in his eye, before and above Christ in his Te ctions, is seeking himself, and not Christ, and *e i* o makes himself his end; which is called *Self- or eking.* 2*ly.* Selfiness vents it self in becoming li he great principle and motive, that ingadges a r man to do such and such a Dutie, or to abstain a rom such and such a sin; men, no doubt, may ac o many commanded duties, and abstain from ne many sins that are forbidden, meerly from a tio rinciple of Self, and as being acted and moved na hereunto by Self: The Pharisees gave almes, , ut it was *to be seen of men*, and to have glory of th nen, *Matth.* 6. 2. To give alms, is a command- na d Dutie, but their motive being Self, Christ in ayes of them, *They have their reward*: and how ha rdinary is it for men that have no higher prin- ur iple than Self, to abstain from such or such sins, s o ecause of the prejudice that thereby they may s i ring to themselves? yea, it seems that *Jonah* ons imself, tho a truly, if not an eminently Godly an nan, was too much swayed, moved, and acted s a y self, both in his refusing at first to go to *Nine- l i eh*, and in his after discontent, when God *a* pon the repentance of that People, spared *im* hem, and did not the evil which he said he ndy would do unto them, he was sinfully, and self in- nd

ly afraid, least he should be counted a false Prophet; and therefore he says, *Chap.* 4. *v.* 2. *Was not this my saying, when I was yet in my own country? therefore I fled into Tarshish*; This in Scripture is called *Self-pleasing*, in opposition to which, it is said, *Rom.* 15. *v.* 3. That *Christ pleased not himself*, &c. 3*ly*. This corruption of Self comes in, and vents it self, when men make something in themselves, the object of their trust and confidence, or that wherein they trust, and whereupon they stay, and lean themselves; as when men, in undertaking any thing, lean to their own wisdom and understanding; or in going about any dutie, lean to their own strength; which we find *Paul* disclaiming, while he sayes, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *Not that we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves*; or when men build their peace with God, and hopes of happiness on any thing in themselves, on their duties, or their own righteousness; as the Pharisees did, *who trusted in themselves, that they were righteous*, *Luke* 18. *v.* 9. And these spoken of, *Rom.* 10. *v.* 3. *Who being ignorant of Gods righteousness, went about to establish their own, and would not submit to the righteousness of God*; this is called *Self-confidence*: and indeed before people can be taken off this, and be made *to trust in the Living God*, they must be made *to despair in themselves*, as 2 *Cor.* 1. 9. clears. 4*ly*. This corruption of Self shews it self in this, when a man makes himself, or something in himself, as his own wisdom, will or affections, the great rule and ground of his Actions; when in this or that Action, he takes counsel from himself, and suffers Self to govern, guide and sway him, in

what

what he does; This is that which *Peter* was guilty of here, in the counsel that he gives to Christ, as Christ's answer clears; who tells him *That he savoured not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men*; And this these wicked people spoken of *Jer.* 44. 17. Who rejected the Word of the Lord, were guilty of, in saying, *we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth*; such are called *Self-willed*, *Tit.* 1. 7. and 2 *Pet.* 2. 10 *Presumptuous are they*, (sayeth he) *self-willed*; They will not be guided, nor ruled by the counsel, or will of God, but will needs follow their own carnal wisdom, inclinations and affections, for attaining their ends. 5*ly*. This corruption of Self, shews it self, in too high estimation of a Mans Self, or of any thing that is in himself: and this is, either when a man has nothing in himself, to found that esteem of himself upon, *when* (as the Apostle speaks, *Gal.* 6. 3. *he thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing*; or, it is when there may be something to found it upon, some excellent parts, moral vertues, spiritual gifts, or graces; yet he is more lifted up, and taken up with these, than he should be; This is contrary to that direction of the Apostle, *Rom.* 12. 3. *For every man not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man, the measure of Faith*; The Apostle knew that every man was much given to think too well of himself, and of his own Parts, Gifts, and Graces; and therfore he layes on this charge, *That no man think of himself above what is meet*; this is called *Self-estimation*, or *Self-conceit*; Yea; it may be ra-

ther called, and truly is, *Self-deceit*, as the A
poſtle clears, *Gal.* 6. 3. where he ſayes, *If*
man think himſelf ſomething, when he is nothin
he deceiveth himſelf. 6*ly*. This corruption of Sel
vents and ſhews it ſelf in this, when it is ſome
thing in a mans ſelf, whereupon his ſatisfactio
or diſatisfaction mainly depends, when he ha
no other ground of content, or diſcontent, bu
ſomething in himſelf, when it goes well wit
himſelf, he is ſatisfied; but when any thing mi
carries, as to himſelf, or thwarts, or goes cro
to him, he is diſſatisfied, he is up or down
and thinks it right or wrong with him, as he h
forborn, or touched, in that which concern
himſelf: Thus it was with *Jonah*, *Chap* 4. an
with *Baruch*, *Jer.* 45. *v.* 3. 5. When he ſayes
wo is me now, for the Lord hath added grief t
my ſorrow, &c. It ſeems to have been ſome ap
prehended prejudice, or haz rd to Self, that ſo
much affected him; and the *Phariſees* in getting
the reward of eſteem and applauſe, when they
gave almes, and made long prayers, were ſatis
fied with that; This is called *Self-love*, 2 *Tim* 3.
2. For it is that which mainly affects men, as i
goes up or down, well or ill with them, as to
their own particular condition; ſo that, if they
themſelves be well, if they be in proſperity, in
eſteem and credit, they care not who be in ad
verſity, or under contempt and diſgrace; and
if it be evil with themſelves, they regard not
how it be with others.

But now we come to the 2*d*. Thing, *viz*.
That this Corruption of Selfineſs is even in, and
amongſt Bellevers, and the honeſt followers of
Chriſt; I ſhall confirm it from theſe grounds.

1. From

From the remainder of corrupt nature that is
et in Christs followers, or Believers, for even
ney themselves have much of unrenewed nature
them; and in as far as they are unrenewed,
ney cannot but seek themselves in some respect,
nd in some measure, as well as others, and
ave much of this Corruption in them; the A-
postle 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. sayes, *They that live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them*; Supposing that before, to wit, while they were spiritually dead, there was a living to themselves wholly; and that now after they were made to live Spiritually, yet in as far as they were unrenewed; there was also a living to themselves. 2*ly*. The many warnings, and directions given to Believers, to guard against this sin, plainly say, and prove, that there is such a Corruption in, and amongst them; ye see here, that Christ speaking even to his own Disciples, calls them to study Self-denyal, and *Rom.* 12. 3. The Apostle presses, *That no man think of himself above that which is meet.* 3*ly*. The many reproofs given to Godly men for falling in this sin, proves that there is something of it, in, and amongst them: it's the great thing the Lord reproves in *Jonah*, who was selfily (to speak so) displeased and angry, both at the Lords sparing of *Nineveh*, and at the withering of the Gourd, *Chap* 4. So that the Lord sayes to him, *Does thou well to be angry Jonah?* We see also the Lord reproves this sin in *Baruch*, *Jerem.* 45. 5. *Seekest thou great things for thy self? seek them not*: And the sad check that Christ giveth *Peter* here, when he sayes to him, *Get thee behind me, Satan*, is a very

clear proof of, as it is a sore reproof for this s
that vented in the carnal counsel which he too
upon him to give our Lord. 4ly. The bitte
fruits of Selfiness that are amongst Believers, ar
sad proofs, and confirmations of this truth, th
there is much of this Corruption even in them
Look to the ways wherein Self vents, and shew
it self, whether in making our selves our end, o
in our being moved, and acted by self,
as our greatest principle and motive; how ma-
ny instances, from the Old and New Testament
might be brought of Godly persons, that have
failed in these? nay, we need no further proof
than that which is within our selves, to bear
witness to this; O! how much do men, in
Preaching, Praying, and Living, act from, and
to Self, Preach to themselves, Pray to them-
selves, and Live to themselves?

For the 3d. thing which we proposed to be
spoken to, on this branch of the Doctrine, *viz.*
Why does the Lord suffer Believers to be so
much kept at under, with such a gross corruption,
as Self, or Selfiness? In answer to this question,
there are these few reasons, or ends which we
shall offer, The 1. whereof is, that he may make
and keep humble his own Followers; that the
continual sight of this Corruption, and the stir-
rings of it, may put, and keep them in mind of
the remainder of corrupt nature, that is yet in
them, and may prevent dotting upon any Gifts,
or Graces in themselves; for this end then, *viz.*
to discover what venom lurks in their nature,
to prevent pride, and keep humble, there is
something of this vile corruption left, and suffer-
ed to stir in them, ye see, 2 *Cor.* 12. *A messen-*
ger

ger of Satan is sent to buffet Paul, that he should be puffed up, or exalted above measure, thorow the abundance of revelations; Intimating thereby, that there was a hazard of being puffed up; and to prevent that, a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him; I will not say that this corruption of Self was the Scourge, that was sent to humble him, but it is clear, that the quicknesse, and livelinesse of this corruption of Self, was the cause why this messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him, in order to the keeping of him humble, and Self-denyed. A 2d. Reason, or end is, That the Lord thereby, may quicken his own People, to more lively exercise of their Grace, when they know that there is such an enemy in their bosom, as no natural thing, or nothing in nature can ingadge and sway them to fight against; For, what is there, I pray, in any man naturally to engadge him, or to help him to fight against Self? nay, nothing can do this, but supernatural special Grace; and even that will not do it to any good purpose, if it be not keept in lively exercise; and therefore (I say) that the Lord may quicken, and stir up Believers to the lively exercise of Grace, he suffers this Corruption to be in them, and to stir, and now and then to move more strongly in them, that thereby he may necessitate them thereto; and no doubt, by fighting seriously against this Corruption, Believers not only evidence the truth of their Grace, but the liveliness of it, and much sincere respect to God; as we see in *Abrahams* case, to whom the Lord says, *Now I know that thou fearest God, in that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me*; It was

not ſimply the offering of his Son, but his only Son, the Son of his Love, that evidenced the greatneſs of his reſpect and love to God. A 3d Reaſon, or End is, That God thereby may further, and promote the mortification of this Corruption, and make his People fall out with themſelves the more; he does not only ſuffer it to be in them. but he will ſuffer it ſometimes to ſtir ſtrongly in them, to vex and trouble them, and to keep them at under, that they may be the more ſtirred up againſt it, and made the more to ſtudy the mortification of it; though it be in them, yet if it lay quiet, and did never ſtir, and move ſtrongly to the obſtructing of them in their following of Chriſt, it might get leave to live in them, without ſuch vigorous oppoſition; but when it moves ſtrongly, and ſtands up in the Believers face, and comes in upon him in all duties, ſeeking to corrupt them; It cannot but provock him the more againſt it, and ſtir him up more ſeriouſly to endeavour the mortification of it: and therefore we find, that our Lord Jeſus would have Believers taking occaſion from the ſtirring of their corruption to fall on it, and to ſeek to have the very life of it taken away, when he ſayes, *Matth.* 18. 8. *If thy right hand, or thy right foot offend thee, cut them off*; or, *if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and caſt it from thee*; And we ſee, that the more *Paul* is buffeted, he is the more in Prayer. 2 *Cor.* 12. And that by the out-breaking of ſin among the *Corinthians*, they are ſtirred up to a greater indignation, and revenge againſt it, than before. 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. A 4*th* Reaſon is, That God may teach his People to know how little they

are

re oblidged to themselves, and how much they re oblidged to him, for any good they get done; and O! but it be needful for them, to learn this lesson well, seing we are naturally strongly inclined to trust in, and lean to our selves; and that this inclination is not soon subdued in us; yea, Christ, and his Grace (to speak so) get it not fully subdued here: however Believers, by the being, and strong stirring of *Self* in them, to the obstructing them in their following of Christ, may see how much they are oblidged to God, and to the power of his Grace, when they are helped to do any thing that is spiritually good, and to follow their dutie aright; and may therefrom be excited to make more use of Christ, and to trust him more for making his Grace sufficient for them, as it's said to *Paul*, 2 *Cor* 12. *v.* 9. 10. *My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness*; whereupon he says, *most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, for when I am weak, then am I strong*; when he was denyed to, and out of conceit with himself; and all *Self-sufficiencie*; then by looking to Christ, and trusting him, he was made strong.

We shall now come to the *uses* of the *Doctrine*, The *first* whereof is, for information, to let us see that it is the natural inclination of us all, to be more swayed with respect to our selves, than with respect to God; for if this be true of the followers of Christ, how much more must it hold true of all others, who are not really his followers, of such *whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, and who mind earthly things*; as

the

the Apostle speaks, *Philip.* 3. 19. In speaking to this use, I shall a little touch at these *two* things, 1. What are the main things that inordinat respect to a mans Self inclines, and leads him to; 2*ly* How this corruption may be discerned, and taken up.

For the *first* of these, I shall not speak of all mans predominant Lusts, or Idols, that inordinat respect to himself inclines and leads him to, but of some of the main things that it swayes him unto; and 1. It leads, or swayes a man to seek to be something in the World (this is a main Idol) as to be rich, or to be learned, or to be great, and honourable in the world; This we see in *Baruch. Jerem.* 45. 5. who sought *great things for himself.* 2*ly.* As it leads and swayes a man to seek to be something in the world, so it leads, and swayes him to seek to be esteemed something; which is another great Idol, that Self inclines to; and this we find to be the great thing that *Paul* condemns in the Preachers at *Corinth*, that they vented their Eloquence, and Gifts, to the end that they might be much esteemed of, and might be called great men, or great Preachers; and this is that which Christ condemned in the *Pharisees*, that *they justified themselves before men*, and sought the esteem, applause and testimony of men, while as they did not approve their hearts to God; and indeed there is not any one thing that inordinat respect to Self, doth readily swey men more to than this. 3*ly.* Though a man cannot reach either of these, to be something, or to be esteemed something in the world; yet then Self will swey a man at last, to think something of himself, when he cannot get esteem from others, or when the

esteem

esteem others has had of him is lost; yet, even then this Corruption can make that a ground whereupon to put a man to think something of himself; when one Idol is broken, it makes him set up another; yea, it may be to think the more of himself, because others think little of him: yea, his esteem of himself may flow not so much from what is external, as from what is internal and spiritual, and lyes betwixt God and him, and so it becomes the more dangerous; we find that even *Paul* was in some hazard of an undue esteem of himself, upon the account of what was between God and him. 2. *Cor.* 12. 4/7. Inordinat respect to self, leads a man to study to promote, and uphold all these; that is, his being something, his being esteemed something, and his own estimation of himself as something, even when he is at a loss in that amongst others; and this comes in as a midst, or mean unto these, as the end; It makes a man leave nothing undone, that may contribute any thing unto these; and will suffer him to do nothing that may be opposite, or cross to these: ye see, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. how far Self will go, in seeking to maintain an esteem amongst others, or a mans esteem of himself; it will even put him to give his body to be burn'd; and we see what the Apostle says, *Gal.* 6. 12. Of false Teachers, that loved their own outward ease, peace, pleasure, and estimation so well, that for preventing the breach, and interruption thereof, by persecution, and that they might be in esteem, (especially with the *Jewes*) They urged, and pressed circumcision; *As many* (sayes he) *as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain*

you

you to be circumcised, only least they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ: So then the most part of a mans actions, in so far as he is Selfie, are directed to one, or all of these ends; either to be something, or to be esteemed something, or to keep up an estimation of himself, when the other two fail.

For the 2*d*. thing, *viz*. How this Corruption may be discerned, or taken up? ye may consider these things for helping to it. 1. If men be doing the Duties they should do without respect to these ends, or without expectation of coming to be something in the world, or of credit and estimation, by following of them, yea, with an expectation of the contrary, even of the Cross of Christ in following them; This is an evidence that Self carries not the swey; for when it bears the swey, Duties are followed with respect to these Selfie ends, and are deserted and forsaken, when these ends are not attainable by them: Our Lord says, *John* 6. 26. To some that followed him, *Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled*; As if he had said, If ye had not gotten some temporal good by following of me, ye would not have followed me; and therefore when he preaches of Bread of another nature, than that which nourisheth the Body, they forsook him: we may also see somewhat of it in *Jonah*, who fearing to lose his credit, fled to *Tarshish*, whereas, if there had been ground to have expected reput and credit, he had readily been as forward as any to go to *Nineveh* on Gods call. 2*ly*. When things that concern Gods honour equally, or that are in themselves equally

good

good, are not so equally pleasing, & acceptable to us because of some circumstances accompanying them, wherein Self may be concerned; that says, that Self bears much sway in us; as for instance, when God does good, and brings glory to himself, in effectuating some good works, by such and such an instrument; if there follow upon this, secret envy, and emulation in us, and no thankfulness to God, because it is not done by us, or because we have no hand in it, then certainly Self bears sway in us, as it did in *Joshuah*, who was angry at *Eldad* and *Medad*, their Prophesieing in the Camp, he would have had none equalled with, let be preferred to his Master *Moses*, because that tended, as he thought, to derogat from his own respect and reput; single regard to Gods being glorified in this, or that work, will make us rejoyce, whensoever, and by whomsoever it is done. A 3*d* way to discern when Self sweyes, is by the carnal anxiety, perplexity, grief, and disquietness, (which are the effects and fruits of it) that men have, when they miss their selfy end: we have had, it's very probable, some expectation of peace, and of the thriving and prospering of Gods Work; and that it would have brought Ministers and Professors in estimation; try what fruit and effect follows our disappointment; if it be carnal anxiety, and disquietness, it says, Self hes born much sway with us; as we see it did with *Baruch*, by this very effect and fruit of it. *Jer.* 45. 3. 5. He cryes, *woe is me, for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow, I fainted in my sighing, and found no rest*; It might have been thought, that this was some holy grief, and affectedness of Soul, for the mi-

series

series of *Jerusalem*; But the Lords answer, *Seekest thou great things for thy self*, shews, that the ground of his sorrow was more Selfie, and that his disquietnesis, was but a Selfie disquietness in a great measure, at least; because he was like to be disappointed of the great things he expected: We had need to consider well, what the nature of our grief is, and on what grounds we are disquieted in sad times; whether it be mainly, for something that concerns our selves, or for that which concerns the work, and people of God. 4*ly*. It may be discerned when self bears swey, by a willingness, and earnestness to have any thing that may serve these ends, we spoke of, followed forth; as when persons would have their good spoken of, &commended: & any evil that may mar their so much coveted esteem covered; In opposition to which the Apostle says, 2*Cor*. 12 6. *I forbear least any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be*; Being a self-denyed man, as he, keept in (as it were) and covered the good which he had; so the selfie man cares not how many know the good that is in him, nay, he is desirous, that many may know of it. 5*ly*. It may be discerned, when Self swayes; If men would observe their thoughts, contryvances, projects and designs, it will readily be found, that there are many of them Imaginary and vain; examine but the current of them, and it will be found, that they are taken up with that which is pleasant, or profitable to Self: and alas! the great scope of the most of People, in all their designs, and endeavours, yea, in all they do, or say, is Self; And as *Solomon* says, *Eccles*. 6. 7. *All the labour of a man is for his mouth*; So we may

may say, that our back, or belly, our credit, or name, our ease, or pleasure, or one thing or other, concerning Self, takes us up, and that all our labour is spent in serving of it; this is the Fruit, the bitter Fruit of that Corruption that dwelleth in us.

The 2*d. use* serves to humble all flesh, that there is such a corrupt principle in us: And *first*, If there be such selfishness, and opposition to God, even amongst Christs followers, then what ever their parts, and gifts be, what ever their graces, and nearness to God be, it becomes all of them to be humble, when they think on this sinful inclination, that is in them, to set up themselves in Gods place, and to get up, as it were, into his Chair; and that ye may stand in awe, and be humbled, when ye think on this Corruption; consider what things it has in it; as 1. An horrible guiltiness, which might fill us with fear, and terror, and put us to tremble; there is no guilt like it in other Corruptions, this is the very height of guiltinesse, being Idolatrie, a mans putting himself where God should be; and accordingly, all the heavy threatnings, and plagues of God, because of Idolatrie, belong to it. 2*ly* That this is not a simple act of Idolatry, as the making, and the worshipping of the Calf in the Wilderness was, but it is an habitual continued tract of Idolatrie; It is our very nature, to be Idolatrous this way; and we are as much; and as often Idolatrous, as we are only, or mainly for our selves, and swayed by Self; yea, it goes alongst the whole course of our life; and if one Idolatrous Act should humble us, much more should a tract of Idolatry,

and

and an idolatrous way, humble us. 3*ly*. That this also; is not only a sin, and a great sin in it self, but owe the Seed also, and Root of other Sins, for in spe as far as our actions are sinful, they spring from eln the flesh, and particularly from this Root of selfi ore ness, as the Apostle shews, 2 *Tim.* 3. 2. When and once men become *lovers of themselves*; they are com ready to become *covetous, boasters, proud, blas- says phemous, disobedient to parents, unthankfull, un- tha holy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, ing false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, headie, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*; All the Legions and Armies of Sins, follow this Sin. 4*ly*. It is the sin that most of all blasts our Duties, and provocks God to wrath and jealousie, whatever *Ephraim* did, was blasted by it, *Hosea.* 10. 1. *He was but an empty vine, bringing forth fruit to himself*; and *James* says, *Chap.* 4. 3. *Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, to consume it upon your lusts*; Ye would have some Parts, or Gifts, that ye may be esteemed; or would be born thorow in such and such a tryal, that ye may not be ashamed before men; but such selfie ends blast all, and keep us from receiving, when we ask; and besides, (I say) his sin provocks God to wrath and jealousie above any sin, as that which eminently robes him of his Glory more than any other sin doth; This provocks him to blast, break in pieces, and to pour out his fury like fire on People. 2*ly*. If this should be ground of humiliation to Christs followers; then it should be so to others also; *Mark* tells us, *Chap.* 8. 34. That Christ preached this Doctrine of Self-denial, not only to his Disciples, but to the Multitude

lso; as knowing well that they were under the ower of this corruption, of inordinat Self-re- pect; which exposed them to the hazard of eing burnt in the fire of Gods jealousie: There- ore it concerns you all, to lay this sin to heart, nd to be humble; O! stand in awe to come in competition with God, *do we* (as the Apostle ays) *provock him to jealousie? are we stronger than he?* sure we are not: therefore take warn- ing to walk softly, and humbly before him.

SERMON III.

Matth. 16. *Verse* 24. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.*

IT is become sinfully natural to all the chil- dren of men, to exalt and lift up them- selves in their own esteem and affection, above all things besides, to set *Self* upon the Throne in their hearts, and to make all other things subservient to it; yea, not only must all other Idols bow down before, and do ho nage unto this great Idol *Self*, (they being desired, and affected, not so much for them- selves, as in a subserviencie to it) but alas! the great and glorious God himself also, is, by them made to stand (as it were) at it's foot-stool, and it set above him, and preferred to him; so that we may say, they must needs be very blind, who see not, that amongst all the detestable things that the hearts of men are set upon, and which

Gods

Gods Soul hates, this is the moſt hateful a
deteſtable.

We ſhew you what is the Scope of the
Words; our Lord Jeſus obſerving that *Peter*
counſel to him, and the offence which he tha
in lay'd before him, proceeded from that bitt
root of inordinat reſpect to himſelf, who, fo
ſeeing his own hazard, in his Maſters, do
thereupon tempt him, to reſpect his own ea
and freedom from trouble, more than his dut
(I ſay) our Lord obſerving this, and knowin
how great, and common an evil this is in a
men, and how much of it there is, even in, an
amongſt his own followers, after he hath rebuk
ed *Peter*, he teaches all that will come after him
this great Leſſon, *That they muſt deny themſelves
and take up their croſs, and follow him*: fro
which we *Obſerved, That Self or Selfineſs, is th
great thing that obſtructs, lets and impeds believ-
ers, in their following of Chriſt*; And that we migh
ſpeak the more clearly, and diſtinctly to this
Doctrine, we took it up in theſe *three Branches*. 1.
That there is ſuch a Corruption as *Self*, in and
among Chriſts own Diſciples. 2*ly*. That this Cor-
ruption comes in, inſinuats it ſelf upon, and
goes alongſt with Believers, in their following of
Chriſt, and their Dutie. 3*ly*. That this Cor-
ruption is the great thing that obſtructs Believ-
ers in their following of Chriſt, and their dutie:
we have already ſpoken unto the *firſt* of theſe.

We now come to ſpeak of the 2*d*. *viz*. That
this Corruption of Self, or ſelfineſs comes in, in-
ſinuats it ſelf upon, and goes alongſt with Be-
lievers, in their following of Chriſt, and of their
duty; It is not only the great principle that the
corrupt

rrupt wicked world walks by, and that Believ-
rs themselves are too much sweyed, by in their
atural and civil actions (though even in these
ney should live to Christ, and not to themselves;)
ut further it is that which too much sweys them
ven in these actions, and duties which concern
em more properly and immediately, as Chri-
ians; and in their following of Christ; it was
hat which sweyed *Peter* here, who, though he
as a man whom Christ had chosen, and called
ut of the world, and who had become one of
's Disciples and Followers, yea, who had, for
considerable time followed, and was now fol-
owing him, and who, with-all had but just now
iven a notable Testimony to Christ; yet not-
withstanding of all this, he so much savours of
he flesh, and this corruption of inordinat re-
ect to himself doth so far insinuate upon him,
nd doth so much sway him, that he takes upon
im, to dissuade and keep back our Lord Jesus,
rom the greatest and most concerning work,
o the Glory of God, and Salvation of Sinners,
hat ever was upon earth, even from suffering,
nd, laying down his life, as a Price of Redem-
ption for his elect People; but this truth is not
only clear f om this instance of *Peter*, but is plain-
y supposed, and implyed in this great Lesson,
hat Christ teaches his Disciples, when he sayes,
Let a man deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me, insinuating thereby, that this corrup-
tion comes in upon men, and stands in their way
n following of him.

For further clearing of this Branch of the *Doctrine*, there are *two* things which I shall speak a little to. 1. To some particular instances, shew-

ing

ing wherein this Corruption of *Self* comes in, and insinuates it self upon men, and even upon Believers. *2dly.* I shall shew you, how it comes to pass, and whence it proceeds, that this Corruption doth so insinuat it self upon them, and gets footing in them, in all that they do.

For the *first* of these, there are many particular instances, that may be given of Self's coming in upon men, and even upon Believers, in following their Duty, and that either more discernably, and palpably, or more secretly, and subtilly; but we shall touch upon these few, namely. 1. In Peoples closing with, and making use of Christ by Faith, that is a Duty upon which all other Duties depend, and here Self comes in to obstruct this greatly. For, 1. If we look to our Justification before God, which is only by Faith, closing with, and resting upon Christs Righteousness, and upon nothing in our selves, we will find, that Self endeavours to obstruct this; for we are keeped back from closing with, and resting upon Christs Righteousness, for Justification, from an inordinat respect to, and confidence in our own Righteousness; as is clear from, *Rom.* 10. 3. Where it is said of the Zealous *Jews, that being ignorant of Gods righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to the righteousness of God*; It was respect to their own Righteousnesse, and their solicitude, how to establish that which keeped them from submitting to Christs Righteousness. *2dly.* If we look to the Believers use-making of Christ by Faith, after Justification, and here Self seeks to come in, seeking to share, and partake with Faith; it comes

in

in and greatly obſtructs their uſe-making of him by Faith, for Light, Life and Strength, to inable for Duſe, and for the ſupply of their wants; and leads them in into themſelves for theſe; yea, it comes in, and greatly obſtructs their uſe-making of him, for peace and acceptance with God, and in order thereunto, (ſometimes at leaſt) it makes them ſeek to commend themſelves to God, either by ſome good internal qualification, or by their external Duties, and their tender, and holy walk: And therefore in oppoſition to this, we find, that as the Apoſtle counted all his parts, gifts, external priviledges, and blameleſſneſs before his Converſion, to be but loſs, not only uſeleſs, but prejudicial and hurtful in the matter of Juſtification before God; So likewiſe doth he account his moſt ſpiritual duties, after Converſion; and ſeeks not by them, to commend himſelf to God, as expecting favour and acceptance with him, upon their account, as is clear, from *Philip.* 3. 7, 8, 9. Where ſpeaking in reference to the time paſt, he ſayes, *v.* 7. *What things were gain to me, theſe I counted loſs for Chriſt*; and as to the time preſent, and even with reſpect to his Graces, and ſpiritual Duties, he ſayes, *v.* 8. *Yea, doubtleſs I count all things but loſs, for the excellencie of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, that I may be found in him, not having my own righteouſneſs* (whether before, or after Converſion) *which is according to the Law*, &c. Where it is plainly his Scope and Deſign, to ſhew that as he would reſt on none of thoſe, as to the founding of his peace and acceptance before God; ſo he found in ſome reſpect, what he had of theſe, through a remainder of this woful Self, a great ob-

obſtruction to him, in his uſe-making of Chriſt Righteouſneſs for this end, and was thereby in ſo far to count them to be but *loſs*. 2*ly*. This may be inſtructed, not only in the matter of Faith, but in all our actions, and in the whole of our Converſation, and in all thoſe actions wherein we are called to follow Chriſt dayly, in which Self inſinuats, even upon Believers; which is mainly pointed at in the Words: I ſhall therefore inſtance it, *Firſt*, More generally, in all that men do or forbear this will be found to ſway them, and, alas! frequently to have too much influence on Believers, ſetting them on to, or deterring them from ſuch and ſuch a thing; It did ſtrongly inſinuat upon *Peter*, in theſe *Four* actions of his. 1. In his moſt unſound, and unſeaſonable counſel to Chriſt here. 2*ly*. in his raſh undertaking, *That though all men ſhould be offended in him, yet he ſhould never be offended*. 3*ly*. In his foul Act of denying Chriſt, notwithſtanding of his fair undertaking. 4*ly*. In *his diſſembling* mentioned, *Gal*. 2. *For before* (ſayeth *Paul*) *that certain came from* James, *he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew, and ſeparated himſelf, fearing them which were of the circumciſion*; All theſe his miſcarriages, no doubt, did proceed from this bitter root of *Self*; It was inordinat reſpect to himſelf, that made him ſuggeſt ſuch an ſinful, and impertinent advice to his Maſter; It was his Self-confidence, that made him undertake ſo raſhly, and it was fear of the loſs of his life, and inordinat Self-love to his own preſervation, that moved him to deny Chriſt, as it was fear of the loſs of Self-eſteem amongſt them of the circumciſion, that

moved

oved him to diſſemble; ſo that whether a man ndertake the doing of Dutie, or be deterred om it, this Corruption of Self, ſeeks to inſinuat n the Perſon, to move and ſwey him this way, r that. 2*ly*. This will be yet more clear, if we ook on Chriſtian Duties more particularly; O! ow very much does Self inſinuat upon people, nd bear ſwey with them, in theſe? Conſider it the dutie of Prayer, and ye will ſee what ſwey bears there, It's ſaid by *James Chap.* 4. *v.* 3. *ye aſk, and ye receive not, becauſe ye aſk amiſs, to conſum it on your luſts*; They had corrupt ſe fie nds before them, in their asking, the gratifying ſome one Luſt or other, by which they were kept from receiving of that which they asked; ook to it in Preaching; ah! how often doth lf bear ſwey with Miniſters in that Duty? the poſtle tells us, *Philip.* 1. 11. *That ſome indeed each Chriſt, even of envy and ſtrife*; out of ſinful emulation, and ſelf deſire, to be as much ſpected and eſteemed of, as the Apoſtle him- ſelf was. Look to it in faſting and mourning, in feaſting and thanksgiving; how much Self ars ſwey in theſe high duties; ye may ſee what ſpoken to this purpoſe, *Zach.* 7. 5. 6. *when faſted* (ſaith the Lord here) *in the fifth and enth moneth, even theſe ſeventy years, did ye at faſt unto me, even unto me? and when ye did t, and when ye did drink, did ye not eat for your ves, and drink for your ſelves?* Ye may look to in the matter of Repentance, Humiliation and eeping in which this Corruption of Self will be und to bear a great ſwey; wicked *Ahab* humbled mſelf, being no doubt, moved thereunto, from Selfie principle; and ye ſee, comparing *Gen-*

27. with *Heb.* 12. that *Esau* cryes and w
for the blessing, being also, no doubt, mo
thereunto, from this principle of *Self*; And
lievers themselves may too much be influen
by Self, in that exercise. In short, there is
any particular Christian Duty, for the ma
which Self may not swey people in; and wh
in it may not (at times at least) bear too m
swey (as I just now said) even in Believ
3*ly*. You may look to it in the matter of suf
ing, wherein we should be most Self-deny
and yet even in that, this Corruption of Selfi
will insinuat it self upon us, either to dis
us from suffering, and thus it prevailed w
Peter here, who, forseeing his own hazard in
Masters, studies to diswade him (if he cou
from suffering; yea, it was this that preva
with him afterward to deny Christ; or oth
ways to engade us in, and to put us upon s
ing for some by-respect, or selfie end; yea
may prevail so far with a man, as to move h
to *give his body to be burned*, in a good cause
the matter, though he be one that wants ch
ty, or a sincere principle of love to Christ; T
is clearly implyed, in what the Apostle s
1 *Cor.* 13. 3. *Though I give my body to be burn*
and want charity, it profiteth nothing. 4*ly*.
may notice it in the tract of a mans imaginatio
thoughts, affections, desires and designs, in
which Self comes in, as the great Idol of
heart, and sweys men; O! what Selfie ima
nations, thoughts, affections, desires, and
signs are men filled with? and how much do th
seek to please themselves in their own fanci
and imaginations? how do their minds pur
vanit

nity? and how much do their thoughts and
esires run out upon, and after meer vanities?
nd all in order to some piece of satisfaction to
lf; So that we may say with *Solomon*, *Eccles.* 6.
*Better is the sight of the eye, than the wandring
the desire*, or the walking of the Soul, as the
ord is, that is, it is better for a man to hold
imself satisfied with what he presently injoyeth,
an to wearie himself with roaving thoughts a-
out, or extravagant and unsatiable desires after
hese things which he hath not: and it seems,
hat the two Disciples who were going to *Emaus*,
hen they said concerning Christ, *Luke* 24. 21.
*e trusted that it had been he, which should have
deemed Israel*; wanted not some carnal Selfie-
presentation of him, and of the nature of his
ingdom, in their minds. 5*ly*. If we look to it,
the most heavenly, spiritual frame and dispo-
tion of Believers in Duty, ye will find, that
his Corruption intrudes it self upon them, even
that; we see in the fore-going words, that
eter was in a very good Frame, when he gives
ch a notable testimony to Christ, and yet this
il follows hard upon the back of it, in the car-
al and selfie advice that he gives him: we see
kewise, 2 *Cor.* 12. when *Paul* is caught up to
he third Heavens, he is in hazard of being exalt-
d above measure, by this Self. We need not
nsist much further in this; if we look to *Adam*,
nd *Eve* in their perfect State, we will find, that
he tentation to inordinat Self-love, Self-seeking
nd Self-pleasing did much prevail with them, to
lose with Satans suggestions, when he had told
hem, *That they should not surely die, but should
e as Gods, knowing good and evil*; *and when they*

saw the fruit was good to make one wise, they took and eat of it; I shall not debate, let be determine, what was the first sinful step in the fall, but it seems evident, that Selfiness, or inordinat respect to Self, insinuating it self upon them, had a great hand in it; what wonder then is it, that this Corruption bears so much swey all their Posterity?

I come now to the 2*d* thing proposed, *viz.* To shew how it comes to pass, or whence it proceeds, that this Corruption insinuats it self so easily upon us, and swayeth us so very much all that we go about, beyond what any other corruption readily doth? In order to the clearing of which, there are *three* things to be considered. 1. What is the nature of this sin of Selfiness. 2*dly*. What is the way that it takes to ingyre, and bear in it self upon us, in all that we do. 3*dly*. We would consider the strong inclination and propension that is in our nature to admit of, and to cherish this corrupt Self.

As for the *first*, to wit, the nature of this sin, I shall not insist upon it here, further than to make some discovery of it's deceitfulness in these *four*, 1. In it's counterfeiting grace. 2*ly*. In it's shewing it self, and appearing like unto Conscience. 3*ly*. In it's pretending some good end for what it sollicites to. 4*ly*. In it's palliating and covering it self, under a specious and plausible pretext of some moral, or natural good, deceiving the person whom it insinuats upon; which make it to prevail so much with us, in that we go about. *First*, (I say) it's deceitfulness appears in counterfeiting of *Grace*; when this Corruption comes in, and insinuats it self upon

upon a man, it very often appears like grace, and makes the man himself think it to be so; as for instance, it will sometimes appear like Zeal for God, as it did in *Jehu*, whose Zeal for a Kingdom, looked like zeal for the Lord God of Israel; it did so likewise in Christs own Disciples, *Luke* 9. 54, 55. Who, thought their zeal was good, like to the zeal of *Elias*, when they would have had fire coming down from heaven to consume these *Samaritans*, that refused their Master lodging, which yet for all that was not so, for they were acted by a carnal and selfie principle, and were of another, and more carnal Spirit than *Elias* was, and therefore Christ tells them, *that they knew not of what spirit they were*, insinuating that they were not acted in that desire, by that Spirit wherewith *Elias* was acted; and as Self, counterfits Zeal, so it counterfits humility also, as we may see in *Saul*, who *did hide himself among the stuff*, when he was to be made King, 1 *Sam.* 10. 22. Which appeared very like to humility, and self-denial, and yet no question, it was some selfie consideration, that mainly moved him to it; and we may see somewhat of it even in *Moses* himself, in his refusing to obey Gods call, when he was sending him to *Pharaoh*, to bring forth the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, *Exod. Chapters* 3. and 4. His refusal may seem to have flowed from humility, yet the way which the Lord takes to convince him, and the *kindling of his anger against him*, plainly say, that it was some fear of hazard to himself, or of his own life, or risking his repute, that made him refuse: 2*ly*. Look to the deceitfulness of this sin in it's shewing it self, and appearing like unto

Conſcience; and thus it is often found, whe[n] men once ingadged in ſuch or ſuch a way, thin[k] themſelves bound and oblidged in Conſcience t[o] follow it; while, in the mean time, it is but Se[lf] coming in under the colour, and appearance [of] Conſcience, that ſets them on to follow it, an[d] makes them reſtleſs in ſeeking to proſecute wh[at] they are once ingadged in; we may ſee a famou[s] inſtance of Selfs appearing like Conſcience i[n] *Jonah, Chap.* 4. To whom the Lord ſayes, *Doſt thou well to be angry Jonah?* And he anſwer[s] *I do well to be angry, even unto death*; It is ver[y] probable, he would not have ſpoken thus, if h[e] had not thought it was Conſcience, and zeal to[-] wards God, that moved and acted him; but ye[t] his pity on the gourd, when God had withered and taken it away, ſhews, that it was not ſo much Conſcience, as an inordinat reſpect to himſelf and to his own credit and reputation, that mov[-] ed him; ye may ſee it, in the dominion of Self in *Herod, Matth.* 14. 19. When the dancing daughter of *Herodias* ſought the head of *John* the *Baptiſt*, It is ſaid, that *the King was ſorry, nevertheleſs, for his oaths ſake, and for them that ſat at meat with him, he commanded it to be given her*; Sure it was not ſo much, if at all, conſcience of his oath, (which being ſinfull in the matter of it, ſhould not have been keeped) as it was fear, leaſt he ſhould be thought and reputed a perjured man, by them which ſat at meat with him, that moved him to command *John* to be beheaded; if it was not alſo lothneſs to diſpleaſe the wanton Damſell, and her inceſtuous Mother. 3*ly*. The deceitfulneſs of Self appears in pretending ſome *good end*, for what it moves

a man

man unto; it comes not in directly, as driving any evil design, but pretends a good one; as tan did, in the tempting *Eve*, and for making e tentation take the better with her, *in the day* ſayeth he to her) *that ye eat thereof, ye ſhall as Gods knowing good and evil*; and *Self* inſi- ating upon her, under this ſpecious pretext, *but the fruit was good to make one wiſe*, ſhe is revailed with to take and eat of that forbidden uit; O! believe it, that Self hath alwayes ſome ne plauſable-like, and flattering deſign or other to ſpeak ſo) in it's head: we ſee likewiſe, at Satan (who attempts and gains much by his entations to this inordinat reſpect that men have o themſelves) when he comes to tempt Chriſt, *Matth.* 4. He does much preſs this in all his ten- ations, that he ſhould ſee well to himſelf, by roviding meat for himſelf, and by making him- elf great in the world, and by making his great- neſs known, for Satan knew well how great a bait this is to all the world, though our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, being free of all original corruption, and of all inordinat reſpect to himſelf, ſo that the Prince of the World had nothing in him of that ſort, to work upon by his tentations, he utterly reſiſted, and perfectly overcame them all, and was not in the leaſt prevailed upon by them. 4*ly*. The deceitfulneſs of this Corruption appears by it's covering it ſelf under the ſpecious and fair pretenſions of ſo ne *moral or naturall good*; Thus we ſee, when Self hath ingadged men in the eager, reſtleſs and covetous purſuit of the world, it will labour to palliat, and honeſt it, with the ſpecious pretext of vertue; and will ſay to them, it is good to be vertuous, and to follow

your calling carefully, and diligently, and to Provide for you and yours; it may be, it will also make use of Scripture, and tell them, *that he who provides not for his own, is worse than an infidel*; Thus also, when it offers to dissuade a man from suffering for Christ, it will shroud it self under the specious pretext of some natural good, and will tell him, that it is natural and kindly for a man to be very careful, and warry of his life, and to see, by all means to the preserving of it: Thus it did insinuat upon *Peter* here, in the advice which he gave to his Master, by which he would have had it taking on him also, Master, *Spare thy self*, be more tender of thy own life.

But, 2dly. we come to consider the subtile way that it takes to bear in it self upon us, in all that we do. As 1, in this, that it does not appear, as inconsistent with, or opposit to Grace, or to the Law of God, as most other sins do; but rather, as very well consistent with both; nay, sometimes it will endeavour to make pretended respect to Grace, and to the observance of Gods Law, subservient to the attainment of it's own ends, and will set a man on to study, and to stir up, and draw forth his Gifts and Graces, to exercise, and to endeavour something of conformity, in his way to Gods Law, out of too much respect to some carnal and selfie end. *2ly.* It doth readily change it self into various Shapes and Formes, so as it may be most taking with, and pleasant unto men; most other Corruptions come in upon us, in one Shape and Form, but this appears in all Shapes; It comes in sometimes (as I said before) like Grace; sometimes like Conscience; sometimes like innocent natural re-

ſpect, and love to our ſelves; ſometimes like publick ſpiritedneſs, &c. *It's wayes are moveable*; and as Satan, when he aſſaulted our Lord, *Matth.* 4. changed his temptations on him, and took different wayes to prevail with him; ſo doth *Self*; when a man falls ſhort of one deſign, it will put him on another; when he miſſeth riches, it will put him to ſeek after credit; and if he fail, and come ſhort of both, it will ſet him on to ſeek his own eaſe, quietneſs and pleaſure, in a more privat way. 3*ly*. It proves reſtleſs, and makes the man whom it ſweys, reſtleſs, and unceſſant in his way; it diſquiets and vexes him, whatever he do, or whitherſoever he go, ſo long as it's deſigns and ends are not attained, and accompliſhed (which they never will be) This Self is never at eaſe, when (to ſpeak ſo) it gets not it ſelf, when it reacheth not the thing it would be at: we ſee an inſtance of this in *Jonah*; but a moſt remarkable one in *Balaam*, *Numb.* 22. One anſwer from the Lord will not ſatisfie him, but again he muſt go and conſult him; having a Selfie deſign, and deſire after *Balacks* ſilver and gold, which he largely promiſed him, if he would come and curſe *Iſrael*, it would not ſuffer him to reſt and ſit at home: Since then this Corruption takes ſuch ſubtile wayes to bear in it ſelf upon us; It is no great wonder, that through our unwatchfulneſs and ignorance, or non-conſideration of it's devices, and wiles, it prevail ſo much over us, in all that we go about. But 3*ly*. If in a word, we add to theſe the conſideration of the aptneſs, pronneſs and ſtrong propenſion of our nature, to reſet, harbour, intertain, and cheriſh this Cor-

ruption of Self, beſide our unwatchfulneſs, incircumſpection, and negligence to obſerve, and guard againſt it; Is it any great wonder, that it gets ſo much way, and prevails ſo much over us in all that we go about?

The *uſes* of the Point are *Three*, the *firſt*, whereof is, That ſeing this Corruption doth thus ſteal in upon the followers of Chriſt, in all they do; then ſure it ſhould make all fear and tremble becauſe of it; eſpecially, when we come to meddle in theſe things which more immediatly concern God; we would alwayes think of, and keep this in our eye, that we may be in duties of worſhip to God, even the moſt ſpiritual and lively of them, and yet have nothing to boaſt of before him, becauſe in them we act much from Self and to Self, and are very like to *Ephraim*; the beſt bringing forth fruit in a great meaſure to themſelves; yea, we would conſider, that we may begin well to a duty, and yet before the cloſe of it, this Corruption may ſo twiſt it ſelf with the dutie, as utterly to ſpoil and corrupt all, or in a great meaſure: There is therefore ſo much the more need to walk in fear of it; and ſeing *Adam* was ſtollen off his feet, by a Tentation to this ſin, when there was no ſin nor corruption in him before, how much greater muſt needs the hazard of all his poſterity be? and how very much are we concerned, and called to walk up and down in much fear and trembling, in much holy jealouſie over our ſelves, leaſt we be altogether, or much influenced, and ſweyed by this corruption, in what we do: if the great hazard that we are in from this corrupt Self, were more thorowly believed, and more ſeriouſly pondered,

red, we would be more convinced of the necessity of walking softly, of living near God, and of making much use of Christ, for the subduing of it, and of all our other Corruptions.

The 2d. *Use* serves to exhort us to learn, not to Judge of our selves, by our own actions simply, nor of our actions by the substance, or matter of them, but to judge of them, as they partake of, or are more or less free from this corruption: That is very observable which our Lord sayes to the *Pharisees*, *Luke* 16. *Ye are they which justifie your selves before men, but God knoweth your hearts, for that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is an abomination in the sight of God:* We may follow publick Ordinances, and go about Duties of Worship in secret, and in our Families, and may have a kind of liberty, and many good words in our Prayers; and something like tenderness in our walk; and yet if we be sweyed only, or mainly by this corrupt principle, and have our selves for our end, all will be but abomination before God, how highly so ever they be esteemed of by ourselves or others: and therefore try what your performances, and duties are by what there is, or is not of this corrupt principle of *Self* in them; Look what it is that brings you to Publick Ordinances, and what makes you pray in your Families, or in Secret; whether it be that ye may not be looked on as meer Atheists, but may be esteemed Religious, or, if it be singly to glorifie God: and that ye may be helped in the tryal of this, I shall give you some Marks, or Evidences, whereby ye may know when Selfiness, or Self-seeking hath dominion over you, in your Duties, first, domi-

ning

ning Selfieneſs in ſpiritual Duties, appears by this, when a man is not the better of his Duties, but is as vain, light, frothy, carnal and corrupt after them, as he was before, he fell about them; as for inſtance, when a man is not the better of Prayer, but is as vain, frothy and carnal, and his corruption, as little mortified after it, as before he went about it; as it was with theſe of whom the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 4. *v.* 3. *Who asked and received not, becauſe they asked amiſs, to conſum it upon their luſts*; They were not the better of their Prayers, they did not mortifie corruption; ye may ſee the like in the *Phariſees*, who, though *they made long prayers*, as it is, *Mat.* 23. 14. Yet they were not the better of them, but as our Lord ſpeaks, *verſe* 27. *They were like whited ſepulchres, which indeed appear beautifull outward, but are within full of dead mens bones, and of all uncleanneſs*: In ſhort then, when people are much in Duty, and yet they are not ſpiritually bettered by Duty, but their Spirits remain vain, frothy, and carnal, it is an evidence, that Self predomines, or carries the great ſwey in their Duties; but when they are bettered, and ſuch an evil frame (as we juſt now ſpoke of) in ſome meaſure got helped, and the Soul made more ſtayed, humble, and ſpiritual, it evidenceth a denyed way of following Duty; ſingleneſs in Duty, ordinarly humbles and leaves the Soul in ſome better frame than it found it. 2*ly*. A regnant Selfie way of following Duty, is never waited upon with ſolid ſpiritual peace; a man that is mainly ſweyed, and ruled by this Corrupt principle in Duty, may have a ſtrong confidence that his way is good, and as he gets ap-

plauſe

plauſe, may grow to a great height of carnal ſecurity; but as he hath no peace with God, ſo neither hath he any ſolid ſpiritual Peace in his own Conſcience, in the performance of Duties; for when Selfineſs predomines, or prevails, it obſtructs the ſweet influence which otherways duties might have upon the Souls Spiritual Peace; whilſt *Ephraim brought forth fruit to himſelf*; he was but *an empty vine*, that neither brought forth acceptable, and pleaſant fruit to God, nor ſuch as could have any influence on his own ſolid ſpiritual peace, but the ſingle, and Self-denyed way of following Duties, much quiets the Soul, and hes ſweet influence on the ſolid ſpiritual peace thereof: Thus we ſee, *Phili.* 4. 6, 7. That *the peace of God which keeps or guards the heart and mind through Chriſt Jeſus*, is the ſweet fruit, if not being in a carnal and Selfie way careful for any thing, and of making our requeſts ſingly known to God, by Prayer and Supplication, with thanks giving. A 3*d.* evidence of it is, when a man, not only hath no ſolid ſpiritual peace, in following Duties; but on the contrary, hath much anxiety and perplexity, through fear, leaſt he attain not, or miſs his ſelfie end; he is perplexed and vexed with the thoughts of ſuch and ſuch events, which may follow upon what he does, toſſed, in a manner tormented in himſelf, with thinking what if this, that, and the other thing follow upon what I do? whereas the man that walks ſingly in the diſcharge of his Duty, remains ſetled, compoſed, and much freed from theſe perplexing fears of events; as we may ſee in *Paul*, *Acts.* 2. 13. Who, when it was told him, that he ſhould be bound at *Jeruſalem*, and he there-

thereupon is beſought with tears, not to go thither, is not perplexed, nor troubled in the leaſt, but ſtayedly, and compoſedly ſayes, *What mean ye to weep, and break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but alſo to die at Jeruſalem for the name of the Lord Jeſus*; Nothing comes wrong to the Self-denyed man; but every thing that comes in betwixt the Selfie man, and his end, perplexes him, and puts him on the Rack; as we ſee in a meaſure in *Baruch*, *Jerem.* 45. 3, 4. Who cryes out, *Wo's me, for the Lord hath added grief to my ſorrow, I fainted in my ſighing, and found no reſt*; He is greatly perplexed, and the Lord points at the riſe of it, when he ſayes to him, *verſe* 5. *Seekeſt thou great things for thy ſelf, ſeek them not*: Believe it; our ſinful anxiety, perplexity, and diſquietneſs will alwayes be found, if well ſearched after, to have ſomething of Selfineſs at the root of it. A 4*th*. Evidence is, That a man who walks by a principle of Self, and ſeeks himſelf only, or mainly, in what he doth, is up or down, as he finds or miſſes himſelf; If his duty go with him, though he have no acceſs to God in it, he will be well ſatisfied; as for inſtance, if he Pray well, in the opinion of others, and win at the following of other Duties, ſo as to be eſteemed of, as a wiſe virgin, that not only hes a Lamp, but oyl in it, he is content, and that even though he have not Oyl in his Lamp; But where ſingleneſs is, a man is never ſatisfied in the performance of Duties, though he get applauſe, and eſteem from others, unleſs he obtain the main end of Duties, *viz*. The honour of God, and ſome nearneſs to, and fellowſhip with him in Chriſt. There will be ſome-

what

what of all these even in Believers where this Corruption much prevails, though it have not dominion, by which it's prevailing power may be known.

The 3*d. use* serves for warning, seing there is such a Corruption, that cleaves to Christs followers, and that deceitfully and subtilly bears in it self upon them in all that they do: then 1. Labour to discern it, and to be watchful over it. *ly.* Labour carefully to guard against it. *First*, I say, labour to discern, and to be watchful over this Corruption; and more especially, when it works most deceitfully, and subtilly, and insinuats it self under specious and fair pretensions, when it looks like Grace, or a principle of Conscience, when it shrouds it self under the pretext of some honest design, or of some moral, or natural good: O! do not judge of things as they appear at the first; but search to the bottom of them, and consider well whence they rise, and whither they tend: There are some things that look very fair and specious like at this time, which, if we examine them narrowly, will we apprehend, be found to spring from this bitter, and corrupt Root; the men that have invaded us, and overturned these Kingdoms, give it out, that they are for great and good things; But look well that there be not much Self-seeking, lurking, and lodging under such specious, fair and plausable pretensions; There are *four* things highly pretended to by them (some of which we touched alittle before) 1. They talk much of, and pretend the interest of Christ, and that they seek to have him great, and his Kingdom to flourish in these Lands; and indeed, none

can

can deny these to be very good, and desirable things; but yet notwithstanding, when his interest is sought, and followed in a carnal way, and when men seek their own interest, cry up themselves, and endeavour to make themselves great, under this specious pretext of respect to Christs interest, and to the making of him great, This certainly is not good: what greater honour could we readily have wished to be put upon Christ, then seeking *to make him a King*, as the People of the *Jewes* spoken of, *John* 6. 15. did; and yet behold what he says to them, *verse* 26. *Ye seek me, not because you saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled*; intimating thereby, that it was respect to themselves, and to an easie way of living, that mainly made them put respect on him, and court him to be their King; but they quite mistook the true nature of Christs Kingdom: and therefore, when the respect that men professe to have to Christ, is such as alters the nature of his Kingdom, and turns that which is a Spiritual Kingdom into a Carnal, and Worldly one, we would be aware of it. 2*ly*. The interest of the people of God, and of Christs Followers, is much pretended, and cryed up; and indeed that also is a good and desirable thing; But as Christs Kingdom is not Temporal and Worldly, no more is the great interest of his People; This was it, that *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* pretended to be for, while they were in the meantime crying down all Government, Civil and Ecclesiastical, for they say unto *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Numb* 16. 3. *Ye take too much upon you, seing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among*

among them, wherefore then lift ye up your selves above the congregation of the Lord? Where we plainly see, that they made high pretensions of seeking after the interest and wellfare of the Congregation of the Lord, or of the Lords People; and yet notwithstanding these high and self-denyed like pretensions; The scope of the place, and these Words, *ye take too much upon you*; evidently make it appear, that their design was, to bring themselves into the Government; and therefore the Lord commands them to take Censers, and to put fire therein, and to put Incense thereon, before the Lord; that it might be known, to whom the right of Governing did belong, by divine destination; so when men pretending respect to the interest of the People of God, overturn Governments, will needs themselves become their Patrons, and Protectors, (when yet his People are not calling them to be so) bring in Confusion for Order, we would be on our guard; for the true and great interest of Gods People, as such, consists in somewhat else 3*ly*. There are great pretensions made to, and cryings up of just Liberty and Freedom, which is likewise a good and desirable thing, as it's very sad, when men are deprived of it; yet a great deal of Selfiness may hide it self under such pretensions; Consider what the Apostle sayeth to this purpose. 1 *Pet.* 2. 16. *As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God*; The Scope of which Word is, to shew us, that Christian Liberty lyes not in mens seeking to be masters of themselves, and to be free from Subjection to others, and to have all others brought in subjection to them; for

he

he expreſly commands us, *v.* 13. *To ſubmit our ſelves to every ordinance of man for the Lords ſake, whether it be to the King as ſupream, or unto governours, as unto them that are ſent by him, for the puniſhment of evil doers, and for the praiſe of them that do well*; and *v.* 18. He commands *ſervants to be ſubject to their own maſters, with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but alſo to the froward*; and when *they do well, and ſuffer for it*, he requires them, *to take it patiently, for even hereunto are ye called* (ſayes he) *becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps*; To be free with this freedom, is the beſt freedom and liberty, even *Liberty indeed*; to the ſame purpoſe, ſayeth the Apoſtle *Paul*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 1, 2. *Let as many ſervants as are under the yoke, count their own Maſters worthy of all honour, that the name of God, and his doctrine be not blaſphemed; and they that have believing maſters, let them not deſpiſe them, becauſe they are brethren* &c. He ſtricks againſt *two* groſs particular errors, and faults that were then amongſt Servants; one, that they thought that they ſhould not ſerve their *Pagan* Maſters, becauſe they were ungodly; the other, that they thought they ſhould not ſerve their believing Maſters, becauſe they were Brethren; both which faults he would have them amending; and adds, *If any man teach otherwiſe, he is proud, knowing nothing, dotting about queſtions, and ſtrifes of words*, and the root of all this is, their *ſuppoſing that gain is godlineſs, from ſuch* (ſayes the Apoſtle) *withdraw thy ſelf*; For this is a ſelfie way; but Gods way is contrary, to wit, not to count gain Godlineſs, and to purſue it under

a fair pretext of acting for God, and his People, but to count Godliness great gain, for it *hath the promises of this life, and of that which is to come.* 4*ly.* There are great pretensions to more light, and to a more spiritual way of Worship, to more pure and spiritual Ordinances, and to a more purely constituted Church, all the members whereof must needs be Saints, and regenerat persons, so far as men can judge; These are indeed very specious Pretences; but it is to be feared, there is much Self-seeking at the bottom of them; if men were humbly excluding themselves, they would, in that case, look more like those that deny themselves; but when they seclude others, to include themselves; it seems that selfiness, and self-conceit bears too great swey, and looks somewhat like these, who say, *Isai.* 65. 5. *Stand by thy self, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou*; and yet God sayes of such, *that they were a smoak in his nose, a fire that burneth all the day*: Neither is it any new thing for People to seek themselves, under the pretence of waiting for, and venting of new Light; for there was somewhat of this even in the Apostles days; as could time permit, we could easily make appear, from *Rom.* 14. and 15. *Chapters*, from 1 *Cor.* 8, 9. and 10. *Chapters*, and from the Epistles written to *Timothy*; nay, we find, that Peoples seeking to vent their Light, though true Light, when it hath not been to edification, is reproved as a fault, and accounted a pleasing of themselves, while it is said, *Rom.* 15. *v.* 1. 2. *we ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves*; and *let every one of us please his neighbour, for his good to edification*:

The

The Apostle makes it *a pleasing of themselves*, to urge the outmost extent of their Light, in some lesser things, as in the use of their Christian Liberty, to the wronging, or stumbling of the weak *Jews*: and seing these men with whom we have to do, pretend highly to new Light, we are concerned narrowly, and impartially to search and try these things, that come out under that name and notion; and should not rashly and precipitantly embrace them; There is a passage, at which we may tremble, while we speak of it, and ye at the hearing of it, 2 *Tim.* 3 *v.* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *This know also*, (sayes the Apostle) *that in the last days, perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, proud, blasphemers*, &c. Which shew, that all these very grossest evils, do readily follow mens *being lovers of themselves*; but withall, it is added, *having the form of godliness, but denying the power of it, from such turn away*; intimating that selfiness, would never be able to get abominable sins covered, were it not for *a form of Godliness*, but yet such being *lovers of their own selves*, are truly guilty of denying *the power*, and true principles *of Godliness*, we are fallen into these *last dayes*, and *perilous times*, and therefore ye would take heed, least *love to your own selves*, or selfiness, though joyned with *a form of Godliness* lead you unto the sins mentioned here.

The 2*d*. Part of the *use* serves (as we hinted) to warn you to guard against this Corruption of Selfiness, or of Self-seeking; and here I shall give you some *Directions*, which, if they were suitably followed, might thorow Gods blessing, prevent Self bearing so great a swey in us, especi-

especially, in spiritual Duties. The *First* whereof is, That ye would learn to set Christ in his own place, in the heart; for, if he have not his own place and room there, Self must needs bear swey in us: but when Christ gets his own place Selfness is thereby keeped out; therefore 2 *Cor.* 4 *v.* 5. *Paul* proves, that he *preached not himself*, because *he preached Christ Jesus the Lord*; whoever they be, that labour not to set up Christ in their hearts, and to esteem highly of, and to be much in Love with him above all things; will have a worse Guest coming in to take up his room; and indeed, it is not much to be wondered at, that Self reign, and prevail amongst People, and that they be mainly, or very much sweyed by it, in the whole of their way, when Christ is either not at all, or but very little in account and esteem with them. 2*ly.* Labour to eye God always, to have a constant depending on him, to have his awe and dread much upon your hearts, and to be much with him; O! study to live up unto that sweet advice which *Solomon* gives, *Prov.* 3 *v.* 6. *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding*; and if it should be said, what shal we do, if we lean not to our own understanding? he answers, *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths*; do as the Psalmist did, *Psal.* 16. 6, *even set the Lord always before you*, and then *he being at your right hand, ye shall not be moved.* 3*ly.* Be much in prayer to God, as the Apostle was, when *a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him*, 2 *Cor.* 12 8. *for this thing* (sayes he) *I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me*; So do ye, wrestle much

much with God by prayer against it, but study in prayer to make much use of Christ, for getting victory over it, in his strength, *who was manifested for this purpose, that he might destroy the works of the devil*, and this work of his this Corruption of Self amongst others; little praying, and little use making of Christ in prayer, makes Self predomine, and bear so much swey in us, as it doth. 4*ly*. We would be more frequently looking to our own infirmities, than either to the good that is in our selves, or to the infirmities of others: Thus we find *Paul* dwelling in the thoughts of his own insufficiency, weakness, and infirmitie, while he says, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *Not that we are sufficient of our selves, to think any thing, as of our selves, but our sufficiency is of God*; he always puts a difference between what he was by Grace, and what he was in himself, and looks upon himself as himself, as being able for nothing: looking too much upon the good we have, or seem to have, and too much upon the infirmities of others, makes us proud, and puffs us up, but looking to our own infirmities, more than to our own good, or the infirmities of others, keeps down the risings of Pride, and looks Self out of countenance, and lets us see that there is much in our selves to humble us, and nothing at all to be vain, or proud of, and that we want a great deal more than we have. 5*ly*. See that ye father right (to speak so) any good that ye have, as the Apostle fathers all upon, and ascribes all his good to the free Grace of God, while he sayes, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace which was bestowed upon me, was*

not

not in vain, but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God, with me; We find it also much pressed upon us, that we would remember, *that we have nothing, but what we have received*; The due and kindly remembrance, and consideration whereof, would prevent our growing proud conceited, and vain of what we have. *6ly.* Resist the first beginnings, and risings of Selfiness in the heart; and as *Solomon* exhorts, *Prov.* 4. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life*; if once we give loose reigns within to this, or to any other Corruption, it will shortly prevail over us, and break out; as for instance, let men once greedily receive, and admit of honour, when it is given them, and they will greatly affect, and seek after it, ere all be done; Consider what our Lord sayes to this purpose, *John* 5. 44. *How can ye believe, that receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?* When men are Selfie, in seeking to be high and happy in the World, and do not place their honour and happiness where God hath placed it, they must needs be carried away with this Corruption of Selfiness: believe it, they cannot be Christs Disciples, who endeavour, not through Grace to suppress the risings of this Corruption in themselves, and to resist tentations to it; as ye may see *John* the *Baptist* did, by comparing *Luke* 13 *v.* 15. 16. with *John* 1. 20. and 3. 28. Its said in *Luke*, *That all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ or not?* but he puts them out of all doubt concerning this, while we are told, *John* 1. 20. *That he confessed, and denyed not, but confessed,*

that

that he was not the Christ; and accordingly speaking to his Disciples, *John* 3. 28. He sayes, *Ye your selves bear witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him*; Here was a great occasion, and tentation offered for Self-seeking, *but he confessed, and denyed not, but confessed, that he was not the Christ*; He was very much concerned, careful and solicitous to prevent the first beginnings, and to oppose the first risings of Self, and of all Tentations to it: We see the like in *Paul* and *Barnabas*, who could not endure to have this tentation offered them, and therefore, it's said of them, *Acts* 14. *v.* 14, 15. *That when the Priest of Jupiter would have done sacrifice to them, with the people, they rent their clothes, and cryed out, that they were men of like passions with themselves.* 7ly. All that would guard against this evil of selfiness, and carry aright in Duty, would be much in Self-reflection before the undertaking of Duties; in the discharge of Duties, and after the performance of Duties; It's lamentable, that most of us never reflect upon, nor consider, from what principle, or motive we are put on to Duty, but if the work be good, for the matter we look after no more; and that many never reflect upon themselves, in the discharge of Duty, that they may see what bears most sway with them in it; nor yet after the Duty is done that they may know either what their carriage hath been in the Duty, or what the effect of it is to them; whereas, if we were searching our selves, and reflecting upon our selves, all these ways, and considering, whether it be love to our selves, or respect to the honour of God, that puts us on to *Duty*, and

and which of the two bears greateſt ſway with us in the Duty; and whether we be more lifted up, or more humbled, when the Duty is over, it would be found a notable help, for holding out, and chaſing away this Corruption: as Self-examination is profitable in other caſes, for bringing to light the hidden things of darkneſs, ſo it is greatly uſeful in this caſe. 8*ly*. Beware of any thing that may foſter or feed this ſelfie principle in you; and in proſecution of this *Direction* beſide theſe things which we have ſpoken to already, that uſe to be tentations to this Corruption, there are theſe *Four* things, that we would have you to guard againſt, as tending to feed and foſter this corruption, or corrupt ſelfie principle. 1. Guard againſt deſigning to be ſome body in the World, and to make a great figure at ſuch a time as this eſpecially; I grant, men may endeavour to make the beſt they can of an evil World, and may of two evils of trouble chooſe the leſſer; but here there would be keeping within theſe bounds and limits fixed by the Lord, and walking according to his preſcribed Rules; and when it is otherwiſe, certainly men are not right: It hath been, and ſtill is a tentation, and ſnare to many in theſe times, their making uſe of occurring revolutions and changes, meerly or mainly for ſelfie ends; I would beſeech you, by all means to guard againſt this now, even againſt that which was good *Baruchs* tentation, to affect to be great, *or to ſeek great things for your ſelves*; but learn to be content with what ye have, and to reſt ſatisfied with the condition that God hath put you in. 2*ly*. Beware of exceſſive, and prepoſterous deſires, to eſchew all

trouble, and what may bring you under sufferin
in your Persons, Estates or Goods; for this ha
in it much of an inordinat Selfie respect to yo
own interest; the Disciples of Christ are ca
led to be always ready to forsake all these thin
for his sake, and *to deny themselves, and to ta
up their cross and follow him*; and such as den
not themselves, will never be in a holy read
ness to take up the Cross; I deny not, but that it
Duty for men, to see to their own preservatio
so it be done soberly, and by lawful means; ye
I think God is angry with the People of *Sco
land*, for too peremptory laying down this as
ground, & for sticking too tenaciously by it, tha
they may, and must take every way, and u
whatsoever mean, without examining the wa
rantableness of it, to escape suffering, as if i
no case they were called to suffer; It's true, w
should not draw on suffering upon our selve
nor run rashly upon suffering, when we are no
called to it; but when Christ brings the Cro
to our door, and calls us to suffer, we shoul
willingly undergo it; and if this were once solid
ly resolved on, it would lay and calm many un
necessary, and disquieting debates amongst us
but many first lay down this for a conclusion
that they should not, that they must not suffer
and accordingly solve all their doubts, and de
bate all matters so, as they may not suffer; thi
certainly doth manifestly and mightily tend to
the feeding and fostering of Self, and will doubt
less prejudge solid spiritual Peace; and would
therefore be watchfully guarded against. 3ly,
Beware of unnecessary ingadging your selves in
the contentious debates, and questions of thi
time

time, the particular nature whereof, I will not now speak to; I shal only say, as they tend but little to edification, so very probably they tend much to the fostering and cherishing of corrupt self; and Self getting men once ingadged, it will make them very greedily to maintain, and stand by what they are ingadged in, if not also strive to lay the more and more weight upon it. Guard against adventuring hastily, and rashly to vent what new opinions ye take up at such time, and against seeking Selfly, or from affecting novelty to propagat them; for Selfness will here plausibly insinuat it self, and suggest, that it is not fit to smother such new lights & opinions; and therefore, when debates about new things arise, needless debates, *which* (as the Apostle sayes) *do but gender contentions and strifes about words*, and when ye think that ye have win to be clear about them, beware of being too forward, and over busie, in venting your opinion of them, or seeking to proselyte, and gain others to your opinion and way, but as the exhortation is, *Rom.* 15. 2. *Let us not please our selves, but let every one of us please his neighbour, for his good, to edification. Even as Christ pleased not himself*; And before ye vent any such opinion to others, consider well, if it be profitable and edifying to them, and seasonable for such a time; or whether it may not be better, though the thing were certainly a truth in it self, *to have the faith of it to your selves, before God*, (as the Apostle will *Rom.* 14. 22) than by unseasonable venting of it and rigid pressing of it on other tender Christians, who are not so clear about it, to disturb their spiritual repose; this would certainly

be found, to be a sober & suitable Christian way not to be swayed only, by what is our own ligh and opinion about such a thing, but also to re gard, what may edifie one another, *For th Kingdom of God consists not in meat and drink* (or in questions about unnecessary things:) *b in righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghos* and yet these debates that were in the Apostle dayes, were as material as any of ours are now as being about some parts of the ceremonial Law of Gods own institution, not then utterly anti quated; which yet turned into vain janglings when they diverted them from their main work of building up themselves in the most holy Faith and edifieing of one another in Love; Christi ans may be ignorant of several things, that the take up too much of their time about, and be no thing the less acceptable with God, and no les useful and profitable amongst his People; and therefore we would look well that we foster no Self at this time, in these things, but study t *deny our selves, and take up our cross and follow Christ*, and to know these things that concern the kingdom of God mainly, and then let in ferious, lower, and less necessary things come in, in their own time, and place convenient.

SERMON

SERMON IV.

Matthew 16. 24. *Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

WHatever be the Spiritual Evils, Maladies and Distempers, under which the followers of Christ labour, it is a great advantage to discern and take up aright the Causes of them, and the Springs whence they flow, in that case, they may be the more easily cured; Therfore our blessed Lord Jesus, the great Healer, and infinitly skilful Physician, who knows best how to cure all these Spiritual Diseases, and Distempers (which often abound amongst His Followers) having in *Peters* carriage, a clear evidence and proof, how easie it is to withdraw the neck and shoulder from his yock, and to decline Duty, and flinch from it, in the hour of Tentation; and being about to make a notably edifying, and profitable use of it to all his followers, in the succeeding Ages of the Church; he (as it were) searcheth into, and maketh clear discoveries of the rise of this evil disease of back-drawing from Duty in a time of tryal, and shews the bitter Root whence it Springs, and then applyes the remedie.

In the Words, he points at the cause of mens

back-drawing from Duty, in a trying time especially, *viz.* Their being too much taken with, and swayed by some one Selfie respect or another, or by some inordinat regard to themselves; this was the very thing, that made Peter to stagger and stumble, and our Lord on this occasion plainly signifies, that this is the strongest pull-back of his followers, and the great obstructer of them, in their ready and resolute following of him, in all called-for Duties, at any rate of hazard; and therefore he proposeth it, as the first and main thing, that is to be taken a course with, and overcome, even this carnal and corrupt disposition of Spirit, Self-seeking, whereby men naturally are more swayed, than by respect to God, and to his Glory; and he lays it for a sure ground, that none can make progress in following of him, till that obstruction be somewhat at least removed, and rolled out of the way, which if it lye still unremoved, there will unavoidably be stumbling, and not a following of Christ, as it becomes Disciples.

We took up this great obstruction in these *three* Branches; The first whereof is, That there is such a Corruption even in Believers; as to be much affected, swayed, and influenced in what they do, by a Selfie principle; to be off, or on at Duty, according as somewhat of Self is concerned, or not, to be more swayed by that than by the Duties that are called for from them, or by the right end thereof, or by the Rule which is given them to follow. The 2d Branch is, That this Corruption of Selfiness does often wind, steal, and insinuat it self in upon the most Spiritual Duties of the most Spiritual and Holy Followers

owers of Christ; and did, accordingly subtilly insinuat it self on *Peter*, in as sublimely spiritual and greatly momentuous a matter, as ever was heard of in the World, even our Lords executing of his Fathers Command, in the great Work of Redemption, and laying down of his Life for his Elect; and whilest he is about the performing of what belonged to him, as his part of the Covenant of Redemption: Even then (I say) this Corruption creeps in on *Peter*, and makes him, under a very specious pretext, by proposing a most unseasonable, and prejudicial overture to his Master, to become an offence to him, though he that was like us in all things except Sin, was a brazen wall against the Tentation, so that it could not possibly take upon him; yet it says this much, that this subtill Corruption may steal in on the best of Christians, since it did so on *Peter*, and that immediatly after his giving of a most solemn and celebrious confession of his Faith in Christ, and of him; of these two Branches, we have already spoken.

The *Third* follows now to be spoken of, which is, That wherever this Corrupt Self bears sway and dominiers in men, it utterly marrs, and obstructs them in following of Christ; It is that which lets and impeds their Sanctification, and Obedience in Duties called for from them, in their following Jesus Christ; or ye may take it thus; This Selfie Corruption, or corrupt Selfiness, whereby men do prefer, and oppose themselves to God, and his will, and to the concerns of Jesus Christ, hinders, and obstructs, and (as it were) myres them in their following of Christ so that they never win up to it, while this cleaves

and ſticks to them unmortified; therefore when our Lord was giving Directions to his *Diſciples*, how they may win to follow him; he firſt (as I ſaid) propoſeth this as the great impediment, that muſt be taken out of the way, elſe they cannot come after him, nor are meet to follow him. This is ſo very clear, in the whole current of the Scripture, that when it ſpeaks of this *Self*, and of Chriſt, the one of them is oppoſed to the other, as 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. *To live to our ſelf, and to live to Chriſt*, are oppoſed as inconſiſtent; ſo *Philip.* 2. 21. it's ſaid, that *all men ſeek their own things, and not the things that are Jeſus Chriſts*; Where ſeeking of our own things, and the things of Chriſt are oppoſed, as incompatible; and *Rom.* 16. 18. *Serving of mens ſelves, and their own bellies*, is oppoſed unto, as utterly inconſiſtent with *ſerving Chriſt*; *they that are ſuch* (ſayeth the *Apoſtle*) *ſerve not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own bellies*: I ſhall further clear and confirm this truth in *Three* general inſtances, 1. Let us look to the way that Chriſt calls to walk in, and let a man adviſe with fleſh and blood, and follow the counſel that corrupt Self gives; and it will be found to ſpeak quite another thing than what is the mind of Chriſt; therefore, the Apoſtle *Paul* ſays, *Gal.* 1. 16. That in following of Chriſts call, *he conſulted not with fleſh and blood*; intimating this much, that if he had conſulted with fleſh and blood, it had been long ere he had obeyed his call, if at all; fleſh and blood has quite another language, as Chriſt ſays to *Peter* in the *verſe* preceeding the Text, *Thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.* The breath of fleſh has

has (to speak so) another smell, another scope and end than the breathing of the Spirit of Christ hath. 2*ly.* If we look to the matter of Faith in Christ, we will find it very clear, for flesh and blood, or this Corruption of Selfiness, is the great obstruction that keeps men from believing; what, I pray, kept the *Jewes*, and what keeps all others, while in their natural state, from submitting to the Righteousnes of Christ? even this, *That being ignorant of Gods righteousnes, they go about to establish their own righteousnes, and so submit not themselves unto the righteousnes of God*; It's mens natural self-esteem, the good opinion, and conceit of their own righteousnes, which they cannot find in their heart to quite and forgo, but stick tenaciously by it, and glory in it, as that which will not miss to justifie them before God, and procure his acceptance; This, this is the great Rock of Offence whereon the *Jews* stumbled long ago, and whereon multitudes in the visible Church, do at this day, stumble, and break their necks, and come never up to a sincere closure by Faith, with the righteousnes of Christ. 3*ly.* It will yet be further clear, if we look on suffering for Christ, and for the Truth, which is the more immediat scope aimed at by our Lord here; There is a very plausible, proper and pertinent like temptation that comes in the way of suffering, *Master, be it far from thee, this shall not be unto thee, pity and spare thy self*, and in sparing thy self, spare us; There is such a prevalent inordinat love to ones Self, that as Satan said of *Job*, in a calumniating way, *Skin for skin, & all that a man hath will he give for his life*; So we may say, what will not a

man give, do and adventure on to spare and preserve this self? nothing is so precious and dear to the man, as that wherein Self is concerned; which was that which the false Apostles so much valued and sought after, (as *Paul* shews, *Gal.* 6. 1, 2.) and from immoderat love to it declined suffering; and is it not obviously to be seen, in our ordinary practice? we love not to sail against crosse winds, to be Religious, when they that depart from iniquity, make themselves a prey; and to hold fast Christs name, and not to deny his Faith, where Satan dwells, and hath a throne, and where such as *Antipas* Christs faithfull Martyrs, are put to death, we have no likeing of.

For yet furder clearing of this matter, I shal speak a little to these *two* things. 1. To the corrupting influence that Selfiness has on Duty. 2*ly*. To the reason of it.

As for the *first*, The corrupting influence that selfiness has on Duty; let us try Dutie from the very rise, to the close of it, in our following of Christ, and we will find that it hath such an influence on it all along, whether we consider Duty, in reference to our selves that perform it, or in reference to God, to whom it is performed: *first*, Consider Duty, in reference to the performer of it, and behold the corrupting influence of Self. 1. In discerning Dutie, Selfiness will readily shut out light, and shuffle by many things to get some pretext for walking contrary to what light points out as Duty, if it should even go with *Balaam*, to seek after new light, not holding with the clear light that it hath already gotten; and if it dar not go directly against

hat light, yet it will un-neceſſarily adventure on re-examination of it, ſecretly wiſhing, and eeking after another light; In this caſe, it's juſt ith God, when men out of love to Gain, or erferment, or ſomewhat elſe of that kind, will ot ſubmit toDuty clearlyholden forth to them, ut will needs ſeek after new Light, *To anſwer hem according to the idol of their own heart*; Thus it was with that wretched Prophet, and it nay be ſo with others, leſs or more. 2*ly*. Look o it in mens following of Duty, and there it will e found ſo to obſtruct and langle them, as it were, that they cannot run the way of Gods Commandments, till *the loins of the mind*, the affecions, and this eſpecially be *girded up*, as the Apoſtle exhorts, 1 *Pet* 1. 13: 3*ly*. This Corruption hath ſuch influence, that it will much blaſt a perſon in Duty, I mean, it will not only unfit, & indiſpoſe him for it, but it will make him dry and dead, in the performance of it; as the Apoſtle inſinuats it to have been with thoſe falſe Teachers, who preached themſelves, they had *words*, but wanted the *Power*. 1 *Cor*. 4. 19, 20. And as it may be thus in Preaching, ſo it may be in Prayer, and other Duties of Worſhip; In Chriſtians converſing together for mutual edification, it will readily make their diſcourſe frothy and little profitable, and turn all, as it were, into empty ſound. In the *Second* Place, as it bleſſs and corrupts Duties by it's influence theſe ways, in reference to the performer of them; ſo in reference to God, to whom they are performed ſeveral ways; As 1. It makes the moſt precious Duties in themſelves to be accounted but as ſins before God, ſo *Zach*. 7. 5. The Lord beſpeaks

speaks his profest People thus, *when ye fasted and mourned, did ye at all fast to me?* Thus it was with the *Pharisees*, their publick and long prayers, which were gone about *to be seen of men*, and to compass some one or other selfie design: that which they looked on as acceptable Duty the Lord accounts the very ground of a challenge; and indeed it's both a just and great ground of challenge, when corrupt Self gets Gods room and place. 2*ly*. As it changeth, in a manner, the very nature of the Duty, so in some respect, it destroys and annihilats it; Thus *Ephraim* is accounted to be an *empty vine* without fruit, because *he bringeth forth fruit to himself*. 3*ly*. It deprives the man of Gods gracious reward; as the giving of a little alms, if it were but *a cup of cold water, in the name of a disciple loseth not it's reward*; so when much more is given from a carnal and selfie principle, as *to be seen of men*, it hath no reward; yea, when men come, as it were, to the very top of Duty, if it be performed on this account, it hath no reward following, but such as they will ruse themselves little of; verily (sayeth the Lord) *they have their reward*; and to this purpose sayes the Apostle, 2 *Cor*. 9. 17. *If I do this thing willingly, I have a reward*, that is, if I go about my Duty of Preaching the Gospel sincerely, I may humbly and confidently expect the reward; but if otherwise, I cannot: what shall I say more of the wofull influence of this corrupt Self? It is a great breaker of the peace; it's a mighty obstructer of inward peace and joy; *This is our rejoycing* (sayeth the Apostle 2 *Cor*. 1. 12.) *the testimony of our conscience that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, we have had*

had our conversation in the world; insinuating plainly thereby, that if he had been without this sincerity, and had made himself his end, he could not have had either joy or peace; This may serve to confirm this part of the Doctrine.

We come now to the 2*d* thing proposed for clearing of this Point, to wit, The *Reasons* why, or how it comes to pass, that selfiness hath such a corrupting hand in, and influence upon mens Duties, yea, often in a great measure, even upon the Duties of Believers. 1. It proceeds from the nature of this Corruption, which is such that it hath more universal influence than other Corruptions, it runs thorow all Duties, and more or less spoils them, it hath a hand (to say so) in every ill turn; other Corruptions run, some in this, and some in that channel, but this runs (as it were) in every channel, it's the great Idol, to which all the demi-gods of lesser idols bow, and submit themselves; it, as it were, swayeth it's Scepter over them all; Thus when the Apostle *James* is drawing (as it were), a catalogue of evils. *Chap.* 4: he says, *whence come warrs and fightings amongst you? art they not from your lusts, that warr in your members*? It is always some one selfie end and concern or another, that brings men in tops with the Rule of Duty: If we look to schisms, divisions and offences, they will be found to come from this bitter root, *Rom.* 16. 17, 18. *Mark them that cause divisions* (saieth the Apostle) *for they serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, and by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple*; Thus it might be instanced in most, if not in all the particular miscarriages of men. 2*ly*. It proceeds

ceeds from the singularly great opposition of this Corruption to Grace, and the utter inconsistency of the one of them with the other, where this Self reigns, it's a non-such enemy, to the following of Christ; other Corruptions are but as Branches of this, and make sudden excursions by more transient acts, but this lyeth close (as it were) in ambush continually, it lyeth at the root, for it contends with Christ for the Throne and prerogatives of his Crown; It's therefore more directly opposit to him, and inconsistent with his honour than other Corruptions, 2 *Cor.* 4. *v.* 5. 3*ly.* It's of a very corrupting influence, because of the pleasant flattering nature of it; there is so great sibness and affinity betwixt men and this Corruption, that it's therefore called Self; It has a kind of Dominion and Law over men, that they think they cannot with reason, nor without prejudice to themselves, refuse to comply with it's dictats; as is clear in that sad instance of our first Parents, *Adam* and *Eve*, the Aple is holden out by it, *as pleasant to the eye, and good for food, and to make one wise, to know good and evil*; The Selfie tentation sayes, it is so very desirable, and so good a thing, that it were unreasonable to refuse to eat of it, there is such a seeming suitableness and congruity betwixt men and Self, that there is no resisting of it except powerful Grace come in for inabling to withstand and resist it; It has such a dominion, that all men out of Christ are living to themselves, This is their great scope, and end in all that they do, and they think it's very reasonable, and suitable that it should be so.

The

The *First use* of this serves for warning, That since this is so very fruitful a Corruption by it's great influence, and since it's so prevailing a Corruption, so often, and so much, that the greatest falls and miscarriages of, even Believers, may be drawn from this, as the special Spring and Fountain of them; we had therefore so much the more need to watch against it, that it wynd not it self so far in upon us, as to bear sway; for if it prevail, there will be little right in Duty; there will be little peace and tranquillity in the mind and Conscience; and little thriving in any thing that is good; if it be dark here, how great will the darkness be? We would therefore by all means cast it out, that it steal not in to marr not only peace and comfort, but even Light it self: *First*, then when ye are consulting what to do in difficult Cases and Emergents, take heed and be aware of listning to Selfie arguments, pleading for, and pretending pity to Self. 2*ly*. Beware of it when it comes to the Duty, that when it prevails not to dissuade from the Duty, it go not along with you in it; there is need of watchfulness and singleness in the one, as well as in the other. 3*ly*. Beware of it when ye have done the Duty; for we may have some success in Duty, and yet by Selfiness and Self-tickling-reflections on it, when done, we may cast all down, and get our reward: In a more special manner, we would be aware of, and guard against Selfiness in these cases. 1. When the Tentation to it is most lively, and is readiest, and likliest to prevail and bear sway: sometimes there will be fewer motives and incentives to this Corruption, and then the hazard is not so great; but

but when it comes to the businesse of suffering, when corrupt nature, and carnal reason offers to speak against the Duty, that's like to be waited with Suffering, and plausibly to perswade the letting it alone; then beware of Selfinesse; It is a strange word that Christ has to his Disciples, *Woe unto you when all men speak well of you*; That is, it is not only very ordinarily an evidence of being in a wrong way; but it is also a kind of snare to men, though they be in the right way, or the thing be right that they are about. A 2d Case is, When the Tentation suits our particular humour and inclination, or when that to which we are tempted, agrees well with our more particular affections; It is no great matter for some to stand out against profest maligne opposition to Godlinesse, nor for others to stand it out against Sectarian Errors, because their inclination and affection swayes them so to do; but to stand it out against both, is another matter, and *to keep our selves from our iniquity*, (as *David* professeth he did, *Psal.* 18. 23. Is a great matter, and a special practique; It's nothing to stand out against that which (to speak so) is another mans tentation; but it's much to stand it out against a mans own proper tentation; As for instance, hundreths have gone over to the side of maligne opposers of Godlinesse, these years past, because their Inclination swayed them to side with that sort of men; but they have need now to be upon their guard, that have been preserved from the former evil, that they go not over to the way of Sectaries, especially such whose inclination doth any way dispose them, to like of that way. A 3d. Case is this, When all things go

go well with persons, and they are fair before the wind, sitting quiet in much outward peace and ease, as it was with *David*; who is then sooner prevailed with by tentations, as proudly to number the people, and to give way to his lust, and for hiding of that, to be accessory to the killing by the Sword of the *Ammonites*, faithful and valiant *Uriah*, (all proceeding from prevailing *Self*) Than when he was wandering up and down the hills and mountains, and had no place to hide his head in; It's harder in a time of ease than in a time of trouble and hard exercise, to resist any Tentation, and a Tentation to Selfiness in particular: yea, this will hold even in respect of Christians spiritual condition, when it is good, and when manifestations of God some way abound with them, as they did in a great and extraordinary measure and manner with holy *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 12. They are then in eminent hazard to be puffed up; and after being in such a condition by not watching against this *Self*, have got sorer and more dangerous wounds, than when their bands have been straiter. A 4th Case is, When the Tentation to Selfiness is near, and offers us a fit reason, and opportunity for gratifying of *Self*, for sometime the Tentation to Selfiness will seem to be far away, and may be so comparatively, and then the hazard is not so great, as when it comes very near, and close up to us, we would at least then stoutly resist it; Thus, *Act.* 14. When the People of *Lystra* came to offer Sacrifice to the Apostles, as if they had been gods, tempting them at a high rate to Selfiness, how *was their spirit stirred?* And how did they shew their dislike of, and Indignation

at

at it, by *renting of their cloths?* So when all the People were in expectation of the *Messiah*, and were wondering what a man *John Baptist* might be, *John Chap.* 1: Then, in that very nick of time, did *he confess and not deny, but confessed, that he was not the Christ*; and so resolutly resisted the Tentation to Self-seeking: I say, in the case of particular, and present Tentations, men are in much greater hazard to be prevailed over by this corrupt Self, than when Tentations to it are at a greater distance. as *Herod*, when the people cryed out, at his Oration to them, *the voice of God, and not of man*, he is so taken and tickled, with this sacrilegious and blasphemous applause, and so puft up with proud Self, that the true and jealous God falls on him instantly, stricks him dead, by contemptible worms; Tentation at a distance may more easily be resisted, but not so easily when it comes near, and, as it were, whispers a man in the ear, (as *Peter* did our Lord) then it would be intertained, as he did *Peter* with a *get thee behind me Satan*; we should not so much as listen to the Tentation, nor come in talking, let be in treating terms with it; many by too good an opinion of their own strength, so run themselves (as it were) in the myre, that they come not well, nor easily out again; and by the way, take it as one mean for preventing the prevailing of the Tentation, even to guard against lanching too far into it; we would hold back, and not enter into the depth of it, but keep near land, near the shore.

Before any further proceeding, let me speak a few words in application to this time; there are in our present Tentations, somethings visible and

and palpable, that call aloud on us, not to come near, but to keep at due distance; as if we consider in the *first* place, the principle that acteth those men who have brought these Lands under subjection to them, and would now have us making our selves accessory to the same guilt with them; it were good that we took notice of the Apostles words, *Rom.* 16. 18. *These men serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, and by fair words, and good speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple*; a Tentation may come to us under very good words, and fair speeches, and yet if we look well to the design, and drift of it, we will find it to be *Selfie*; the principle so much talked of, and magnified is called *Self-preservation*, but it may more fitly be called, *preserving of themselves*, in their power and greatness. *2ly.* If we consider the means that they make use of, and the ways and methods which they follow, we will find that the prospect is, to be great, to be the head, and not the tail, and to be sole Masters; and indeed it were a wronging of our light to deny, that selfiness is prevalent here; That it is this which puts them to take such and such measures, and not others, and to give such and such orders is too, too palpable; and if they walk on this ground, ye are concerned to be aware. *3ly.* If we look to the great motive, that pousseth on the Tentation, we will find it to be Selfiness; on the one side, there is utter ruine and undoing, and this hath great weight with Self; on the other side, there is great gain and advantage, much peace, ease and freedom from trouble, and these are very taking with Self; I grant these things considered abstractly

ſtractly, and in themſelves, are not evil, yet a
Selfie motives and would therefore be the bett
weighed. 4ly If we conſider the effect th
theſe have upon the multitude, it will be foun
to ſpeak out much Selfineſs; what is it that mo
all *Scotland*, *Shyres* and *Burghs* ſo willing a
ready to ſend out their Commiſſioners, but t
weight that a Selfie Tentation hath with them
that if they do it not, it will be worſe with them
So then, when regard to Self predominantly in
fluenceth all, we are called to look well how w
ingadge & how we go on; for it will not ordinarly
be found that Chriſts mind & Self agree well toge
ther, nor that ever Chriſts mind, & natural heart
ſo univerſally accorded; It was never ſo ſeen i
Scotland before, at leaſt we never ſaw it ſo be
fore, when People were called to appear for the
good and advantage of Religion, and of the King
dom; Therefore ye had need ſo much the more
to fear, when ye ſee the principle to be Selfie,
the means and motives to be Selfie, and when
ye ſee them taken ſo well with, & to have ſuch
an effect upon the Multitude, poſe and put your
own hearts to it; if upon the one hand, ye were
delivered from hazard; and if upon the other
hand, there were not ſuch temporal advantages,
whether it be not very probable ye would not be
ſo ſoon clear to meddle in this matter; & when
men are called to Act, they, no doubt, are concern-
ed to be ſo equally poiſed, that the Ballance may
not be caſt only upon ſuch a ground as that; and
to be ſo Single, as they may have peace in their
own Conſciences toward God.

But it may be *Asked* here, how can this Ten-
tation be known, when any thing offers it ſelf

to

ous, under a fair and specious pretext, and yet is nothing else but Self? For *Answer*, I say, it may be known, and I shal from *Peters* way here, give some few marks, whereby it may be known; *First*, then it walketh, and is more swayed by events, than divine Rules of Duty; therefore, when our Lord is called to duty, to go to *Jerusalem*, and gives an account of what is to befall him there, *Peter* sayes, *Far be it from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee*; Whereas Singleness looks by, and over events to Duty, as it did in *Paul*, *Act.* 21. who would needs go to *Jerusalem*, notwithstanding all the most importunat, mournful and heart-breaking dissuasions of his Christian Friends, from going thither, because of what *Agabus* foretold he was to meet with, declaring himself *ready, not only to be bound, but to die there for the name of the Lord Jesus*; I will not say, but the consideration of Events may have its own weight in mens consultations, especially about their temporal affairs, but it's dangerous, and unsafe to take them for grounds of clearing the Conscience about Duty. 2*ly*. This Tentation to Selfiness doth ordinarly lay more weight upon what deals with, and moves the Affections, than on what clears and convinceth the Judgement and Conscience, by sound reason; If thou do this or that, it will be waited with such and such hazard and prejudice, and if thou wilt forbear, thou shalt have such and such advantage by the forbearance; *Peter* is much here in pathetick dissuading, but offers no reason; so it's said of these false Teachers, *Rom.* 16. *v.* 18. That *they deceived with good words, and fair speeches*, There was more plausible insinu-

ations

ations on the affections, than any strength of solid reason, and argument. 3ly. This Tentation loves better to round in the ear, and in secret, than to shew it self in the light, and more publickly; Thus *Peter* here *takes our Lord aside*, and rounds his advice in his ear, being unwilling to bring it under publick consideration, and canvassing, (forgetting that he had dealt with one who was not capable of being taken in the least, with the most secret subtile and plausible Tentation:) Hence oftentimes men will not only bring over themselves, but others also to comply with a Tentation, by that which they dar not bring forth to the Light, and to open view; motives working on the affections, may sometimes do in secret, but when a thing comes to light, and above board, then there must be reasons brought forth, which being wanting, this Tentation deals by motives, (as I said) in secret; There are but few cogent reasons brought to induce us to acknowledge these men that will rule over us, but many motives: if we do it not, this & that, and the other piece of suffering will follow upon our refusing, and is it not best, we be all one? and the like, no satisfying evidence given that the thing is right. 4ly. This Tentation is ordinarly violent, it cannot indure to be contradicted, or opposed; it enters into men with a mighty torrent and speat, so that the clearest word from Scripture will not so convince, as to divert from complying with it, nay, they will not be taken off till God himself powerfully convince and rebuke, as we may see in *Balaam* (and *Peter* himself must be rebuked with a sharp *get thee behind me Satan*;) and this comes to

pass

pass from the influence that this subtile Self hath, on prejudging of mens light, as it's said of a *Gift*, that *it blinds the eyes of the wise, and perverts the understanding of the prudent*; It makes a man so partial, as he will step over clear and convincing Reasons, and yet not observe himself doing so, neither will he suffer to be contradicted; Therefore let this warn you, to look well how ye behave in these times, and that ye weigh things singly, and impartially, as in the sight of God; There will be but little advantage found in all the motives that are brought for life, and the conveniencies and accommodations of it, when the truth of what our Lord sayes shall fully appear, *He that saves his life, shall lose it*; keep then, O! Keep at a distance from every thing, that may indanger the life of your Souls, or wound your Peace.

The *2d use* serves to exhort you to beware of intertaining and harbouring this Corruption, as well as of letting it in; for it's of such a nature, that where it once gets entry, it still presseth, and in more grosse wayes to be further in; and it keeps life and vigour, as long as any Corruptions, and therefore, if we think our selves concerned to keep it out, we should do much more, to cast it out.

But there are a few *Questions*, that occur here to be spoken to. The *First* whereof is, whether or not this Corruption can consist with Grace? *Ans.* Ye must distinguish this, as other Corruptions; there is a sort of Selfiness that hath dominion, is un-interrupted, and carrieth full sway; & there is a Selfiness that hath not dominion, but is in part subdued, interrupted, opposed

posed, wrestled with, and protested against. The first sort we find to have been in the *Pharisites*, who were poisoned and swelled with it at that height, that it quite spoiled all their Duties: the other sort doth now and then set up it's head in *Peter*, in the Sons of *Zebedee*, and the other Disciples, but it is born down, and issueth in sad challenge: So then for a direct and short answer to the question, we say that Selfiness in its Reign and Dominion cannot consist with Grace being so considered, it is directly opposed to Christ, and allowed to take his room; and is an evidence, and distinguishing Character of a graceless man, from a sound Believer, whose desire, design and endeavour it is, being constrained thereto, by the love of Christ, *not to live henceforth to himself, but to him that died for him*: but the Selfiness that is in part subdued, interrupted, opposed, wrestled with, and protested against may consist with Grace, as is clear in *Peter*, and others of the Saints, and even singularly Self-denyed *Paul* was in hazard to be puft up *with the abundance of Revelations*, though Grace bare it down.

The 2d *Question* is, Whether a Believer may attain that length, as to be freed from Selfiness, in any Duty that he performs? I *Answer*, That a Believer cannot in any Duty be absolutely free from all Selfiness; for being but in part renewed, he is proportionably but in part Self-denyed; yet beside that, it cannot have dominion over him as no other Corruption can, he may, through Grace, come to have a great hand over it, so that it shall not much prevail, yea, by his protesting against it, by his vigorous opposing

fing of it, and wrestling with it, and by his ſlyking of it, and lamenting over it, he may in, and doth oftentimes, to a conſiderable victory over it, and to a good meaſure of ſingleneſs in his Duty, but never deliberatly, and advisedly propoſeth it to himſelf, as the great ope he aims at, as the natural man doth.

A 3*d. Queſtion* is, May not a natural man, a ypocrite diſcern Selfineſs, be challenged for it, d ſome way wreſtle againſt it? and if ſo, what fference is there betwixt Selfineſs in the Hypocrite, and the Believer? I ſay, for *Anſwer*, hat the furtheſt length that the natural man meth, in the diſcerning of Selfineſs, he falls ort of, and ſo differs from the Believer in theſe ree things. 1. The Hypocrite, or natural man ay diſcern that Selfineſs which is more groſs, ſo he may take up the motive whereby he is mainn, if not only ſwayed to Duty; he may diſcern mſelf to do, or forbear ſuch a thing, which he ould not do, or forbear, if Self were not concern; As *Pilat* might have diſcerned, and belike d diſcern, that it was *Selfie reſpect to Ceſar*, at made him deliver Chriſt to be crucified, and *alaam* very probably diſcerned, that it was ve to the Gold, that made him ſo very deſirus to go with the Meſſengers of *Balak*; and *aul*, when he perſecuted *David*, knew that *avid* was more righteous than he, and that the eaſon of his perſecution was the buſſineſs of he Kingdom; but the natural man, or hyporite hath not a diſcerning of Selfineſs in the oor, as well as in the Branches of it; which he Believer hath, when in any meaſure in caſe, nd at himſelf; The natural man diſcerns not th:

Self-inclination of his nature, judging himself
be, because of it, sold under the same, and gro
ing under it, as being the very slave to it; T
the Believer attains through Grace, suitably
his gracious state; but never the hypocrite,
if at any time, the hypocrite wrestle against
it is not against it as his end, he may well
straitned, and difficulted, in his choice of mi
to come by his end; as *Balaam* was, whether
go, or stay, forward, or backward; but
Believers wrestling is against it, as his end.
The Hypocrite comes short in this, that any
cerning that he hath of *Self*, is nor universal,
may discern it in some few of it's Branches,
in some few of his actions, but not in all, n
most, for he hath nothing to discern *Self* w
but Self, and a selfie-eye is not fit to discer
Selfie Root; and therefore there is always so
thing, yea, much that he seeth not; he is
challenged for all the Branches of it, for
as well as another, which he would be,
he had a savingly inlightned Mind and Co
ence to discern and challenge for all,
most readily he is not challenged when
is more subtile, and (to say so) spiritual,
contradicts not Duty, but more insensibly
in on him, as it was in that case of the pr
Self-seeking *Pharisee*, *Luke* 18. Who said,
all had been right, and nothing wrong, G
thank thee, &c. 3*ly*. A natural man comes
as to the discerning of Selfiness in the matter
Faith; he may possibly discern it, when he
himself in the room of God, or his Self-
when it is more gross, but when it comes to

g on ſomething in Self for Salvation, or to ſtick-
g to ſomewhat in Duties, and in the moſt ſpi-
tual Duties, he doth not diſcern this; and the
aſon is, becauſe *that which* manifeſts this is
piritual Light, and it is the Spirits Work to con-
nce of not believing on Chriſt; and a natural
an being under the Covenant of Works, and
e obligation thereunto, as ſuch being his rule,
nd he not being inlightned according to the co-
enant of *Grace*, there is nothing in the cove-
nt of Works, that clearly diſcovers to him this
orruption in the matter of Faith: Anſwerable
o theſe *three*, in as far as the natural man hath
ght, he may be challenged, and ſome way
rive againſt Selfineſs, but no further; he may
reſtile againſt a particular Idol, but not againſt
l Idols; and when he wreſtles againſt that ſame
dol, it is but one part of Self-wreſtling againſt
nother part of Self; and when he ſtrives or
reſtles faintly, as it may be, or rather, when
elf-love wreſtles againſt Selfineſs in ſuch and
ch a Duty, it is but Self wreſtling againſt Self;
we may ſee in *Balaam*, who, when he ſees the
ngel, and is feared for his life, he will go back
gain, but not from any diſcerned and hated
elfineſs, but from a new fear of Self-hazard;
nd accordingly, when he had no hope to pre-
il thereby, he leaves off his divination, and yet
ides not at this reſolution; but his heart keep-
g the Corruption ſtill living, he gives wicked
dvice to *Balack* for bringing the People of God
to a ſnare, and under his wrath thereby; So then
he greateſt challenge that a Hypocrite can have
r Selfineſs, is but in ſome particular Act, and
s wreſtling is, but (as I ſaid) by one piece

of Self against another, or by one Idol or L against another; that which makes the wrest is something competing with that which would fain be at; it is not how to get him born down, but rather how to get himself or keept up; as in other cases might be clear whether a Hypocritical *Balaam* go backward forward, whether he curse or bless, he seeks himself; he turns himself to bless, w he is restrained from cursing, he seeks not a divination, when he sees that God will not su it to succeed, yet still rotten at the heart, this reigning Corruption of Self, turn himsel he will, and alter his case as it may, it must ways contribute to that, as his great end.

There is a 4*th Question* of affinity with former; how does this reigning Self in a Hy crite differ from subdued Self, in some measu in the Believer? and how may this difference known? I *answer*, *first*, Selfiness in the Hy crite is the great thing that bears him up, puts him forward in his Dutie, (and as it we prompts him to it; and when this wind of ten tion blows, he goes actively about his duty, sails fair before the wind; but when that w ceaseth, he is quite becalmed, and saggs; Selfiness greatly unfits the Believer for Du The Hypocrite always prays best, when there many to hear him; but when Selfiness previ over the Believer, frothiness and levity of spi greatly impeds him, in spiritual performance Thus Selfiness, in a sort helps the Hypocri but hurts the Believer; and therefore, as it good token, to find Selfiness an impediment, obstruction in the way of Duty, so it is an e tok

ken, when a man finds himself, and that to his isfaction, helped by it. 2*ly* A man in whom lfiness reigns is satisfied, when he hath obtain- his end, which is himself; as when he hath rformed any Duty, and gets applause from en, he is well pleased and satisfied; but where lfiness is in part subdued in a Believer, in any measure it prevail in the Duty, hen he looks back on the Duty, he readily es so much carnalness and selfiness in it, that it ill prove a greater burden, and more weighty ercise to keep him low, sober and humble, an all the applause and success of the external erformance can contribute to theblowing of him ; and therefore it is an ill token, when men e very well pleased and satisfied with their do- g of Duty; and a good token, when men are ot well pleased, nor satisfied either with them- lves, or with their own performances, but se- lously humbled under discovered Selfiness, Car- alness and short-coming therein. 3*ly*. Selfiness the natural man, or Hypocrite, is the thing that e would fainest be at; to get the good conceit & pinion of himself upholden, is his great desire nd design; but Selfiness in the Believer, is that hich he would fainest be freed from; there is othing that stands so much in the Believers way s this Corruption of Self doth, and there is no- hing that he covets more to be rid of. 4*ly*: Where Selfiness reigns, and has the Throne, men are impatient, (as I said a little before,) to be thwarted and contradicted; and if they fall to be contradicted, they become either quite faint and discouraged, or more carnal and proud: where Selfiness is in part subdued, Christians

are glad, when at themſelves, when they m ſet a
with any thing that may humble them, and b ſons
down that Corruption; not darring to be as ma
content to meet with reproach, when it is wi to ſay
out their own Sin, or when a fault is told th ſtly,
for laying of their pride; Hence *Paul*, 2*Cor.* and,
ſayes, *That he will moſt gladly rejoyce in his* herſ
firmities, in troubles, perſecutions and reproa oun
es; When he ſaw he could not well bear re ould
lations without ſomewhat to keep him low; a hat,
(If I may ſo ſay) it is a kind of lightning rom
Souls, in any good meaſure mortified to this Id ſ Se
whileſt they are wreſtling againſt it, when a ont
thing in providence falls in, and (as it were ons
ſhames Selfineſs, and helps them to beat it dow elve
It is made very welcome, as a thing which th hro
ſtood in need of; as *David* welcomed *Abiga* o,
who came ſeaſonably to divert him from proſ wh
cuting his raſh, paſſionat and Selfy reſolution gon
gainſt churliſh *Nabal*, and all the men of h o
houſe. There is a 5*th Queſtion*, which is th by
Whether when Perſons are ſo much haunte th
with, and ſo frequently aſſaulted by Selfineſs, whe be
it ſo hangs on them, and beſets them ſo eaſily i a
every thing that they go about, that they can in
not get it ſhaken off, whether (I ſay) in this caſ ſ
they ſhould not leave Duty, and let it alone?
To which I *Anſwer* ſhortly, That the thin
which ſhould direct us in the point of Duty is
neither Corruption within, nor Tentation with-
out, but the Rule preſcribing, and the command
laying on the Duty; therefore they would be ſo
far from giving way to this Tentation, for leav-
ing off their Duty, that on the contrary, they
would ſo much the more ſeriouſly and diligent-
ly

y m set about it: But it will be *Objected*, that nd p sons so doing, will sin. *I Answer, First*, Per- be s may indeed sin, but it is accidentally, and s wi to say so) in a circumstance, but they sin di- th ctly, and in a manner madly against the com- *Cor.* and, when they quite cast off Duty, because of *his* thering Selfiness. *2ly.* In quiting Duty on this *pro* ound, they fall into the same sin, they say they r re ould eschew, and also into another with it; for ; a hat, I pray, is it, that keeps a person back ing om Prayer (for instance) because of his fear Id Selfiness, when he is called to it, but Selfiness n a ontradicting the Command. *3ly.* Though Per- ere ons sin necessarily (by a necessity they them- ow lves have contracted) in doing their Duty, th hrough a mixture of this Corrupt Self, yet not *ga* so, as when they altogether give over Duty; for ro when Duty is in obedience to Gods Command on gone about, Self gets not such way, nor doth it so much prevail, as when it is quite neglected; h by neglecting of Duty, we bring our selves under te the certain guilt of direct and down-right Re- ne bellion against a divine Command, to eschew an i accidental sin, which also God might graciously, u in a great measure prevent: I thought to have l spoken a word here to you that know, or at least acknowledge no other rule, councellour or end, but flesh and blood, but carnal and corrupt Self; I shall only desire you, for the Lords sake, to consider, how sad your case must needs be, when all your meerly civil, and formal way in Religion shall be found to have referred to your self, only as your end, and when God shall say to you, when ye prayed, heard the Word, and read it, when ye did eat and drink, ye did not

any of all these things to me; and yet this is the case, not only of the more grosly prophane, but also of all meerly legal and formal Persons pretending to Godliness, as if because of their external performances, God had by special Grace differenced them from others, while in the mean time, they still go about to establish their own righteousnesse, and quite neglect to make use of Christs: If this Corruption of Selfiness be such an obstruction to Believers, what must it be to you, who live to your selves, as if ye had been born to your selves, nay, as if ye had given a being to your selves, who were never divorced, nor delivered from the dominion of Self? The Lord himself open your eyes, that ye may see the deplorableness of your state and condition.

SERMON V.

Matth. 16. 24. *Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me.*

YE may Remember, we drew these Words to *Four* Heads. 1. The great and main design, that such as would ingadge with Christ should have before them; even *to come after Christ, and follow him.* 2*ly*. The great obstruction that lyeth in the way of men, coming after, and following of Christ, and that is *Selfiness*, or Inordinat regard to a mans *Self*; which makes him fall short in that Respect and Du ty

Duty which he owes to Christ. 3*ly*. The Qualification that is required in, or the Duty that lyes upon the man that will come after, and follow Christ in three steps; every one of which qualifies (to say so) another. 1. *He must deny himself.* 2*ly*. *Take up his cross.* 3*ly*. *Follow Christ.* 4*ly* The necessity of this, *Let him do it.*

Of the *First two*, we have spoken already, and come therefore now to speak a word to the *third*, *viz*. The Qualification required in, or the Duty that lyes upon a follower of Christ, in these *three* steps proposed; The *first* whereof is *Self-denyal*; whence we *Observe* (the Words clearly give us the Doctrine) *That is is requisit in all that would follow Christ, and give up their names to him to be his Disciples, that their chief work be to deny themselves*; This is the first thing that he requires here, and the first step of the way, without which none can follow him, nor make any progress in their way of following him; for clearness cause, ye may take the *Doctrine* in these *three* Branches, or look upon it these *three* ways. 1. As it holds out Christs calling unto this, and his laying it on his followers, as a Duty, to *deny themselves*. 2*ly*. As it is a requisit qualification, fitting them for following of him; shewing, that Self-denyal is that which notably qualifies a Person to be a follower of Christ. 3*ly*. As it holds forth a necessity of the Duty, that a man must needs by any means deny himself, that would come after, and follow Christ; all the *three* return to, and resolve in this, even the commending of this Grace of *Self denyal*, and in pressing the necessity of it; and therefore I shall speak of them complexly together. 1. By showing what

Self-denyal is, 2*ly*. By clearing those *three* forementioned Branches. 3*ly*. By making use of them; and all this will be the easier, and we may be the shorter in it, that we have spoken of the contrary corruption of *Selfiness* somewhat largely before.

For clearing then of the *First* of these, to wit, What is meant by *Self-denyal*; Consider *First*, what is meant by Selfiness, which is nothing else than a mans excessive, and inordinat regard to himself, and being too much swayed with Selfie-respect; and therefore to deny our selves, is to be abstracted from all inordinat Selfie-respects, and considerations, in the following of Christ, as if we had not a Self (to speak so) as if we had no reason, wit, will, nor parts of our own; so to be denyed to these, as if we had them not at all, or as they were not ours, or in us. 2*ly*. Consider how this word is used. 2 *Tim*. 3. 5. *Having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof*; That is, though they make profession of Godliness, yet they no more care for the power of it, than if there were not such a thing; they have no regard in their life to God, but whatever be their profession of him in word, *yet in their works they deny him*, as it is, *Tit*. 1. 16. So that a man who is denyed to himself aright lives in respect of any inordinat estimation of, love to, delight in, and care for himself, and endeavours to walk as singly, in respect of these, as if no such affections, or passions were at all in him. 3*ly*. Consider, and compare some Scripture-phrases, and examples, and they will help to clear what *Self-denyal* is, as 1. That Phrase which we have, *Heb*. 11. 24. in the example of *Moses*, *By faith Moses*

Moſes refuſed to be called the ſon of Pharaohs daughter, and chooſed rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God; It is the ſame word in the Original that is uſed here, *He denyed to be called the Son of Pharaohs daughter*; he had ſo little undue reſpect to his own eaſe, pleaſure, profite, and preferment, that when the Tentation to theſe comes in his way, he walks as ſingly and ſelf-denyedly, as if he had met with no ſuch thing; when that Tentation aſſaulted him, he reſolutely refuſed, and denyed to admit of it. A 2*d* Phraſe we have in *Pauls* example, *Gal.* 6. 14. *God forbid,* (ſayeth the Apoſtle) *that I ſhould rejoyce ſave in the croſs of Chriſt, whereby the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world*; Oppoſing therein his own ſingle way, to the Selfie way of theſe falſe teachers, who preached circumciſion to eſchew the Croſs, and ſhews what it was to be denyed in that way, *Even to be crucified to the world, and to have the world crucified to him?* So that the world had no more power to tempt him, than a dead man hanging on a Croſs would have had. A 3*d*. Phraſe we have, in the example of *Levi*, *Deut.* 33. 9. *who ſaid unto his father and mother, I have not ſeen him, neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children*; In executing Juſtice, at Gods command, he did it as impartially, and Self-denyedly, as if he had never ſeen Father nor Mother, Brethren nor Children, or as if he had been under no obligation, or tye of reſpect, by vertue of ſuch near and dear Relations The 4*th* and laſt Phraſe, we have in the perſon & example of *David*, *Pſal.* 131. *v.* 2. *I have* (ſaith he) *behaved and quieted my ſelf as a child that is weaned of his Mother,*

Mother, my soul is even as a weaned child; Importing, That he had no sort of allowed inordinat purpose, project, or design in the world for himself, no more, in a manner, than a Child but just now weaned from his Mother hath any project at all; but was ready to take off God's hand, whatever he was pleased to dispense, and carve out to him; and that he was not swayed by any particular allowed inordinat respect to himself, or by any finistruous selfie design, but was lying before the Lord, ready to receive, and take on any impression, that he should please to put on him. If now we lay these *three* together, we will in a good measure see, and understand, what *Self-denyal*, or a *Self-denyed* Person is, and what is called for from a man that would deny himself in following of Christ; it's even to endeavour to be as single, as if he had not a Self, and that he be denyed to all inordinat respects to, and considerations, dead in a manner, to all undue Self-love, Self-pleasure, Self-advantage, Self-estimation, Self-design, Self-confidence, and the like.

In the *Second* place, for clearing it in these *three* Branches which we proposed. 1. We find *Self-denyal* called for as a Duty, as a fruit of new Obedience, and as a tye and obligation that lyes upon Christians, by vertue of Christs purchase; So 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. Where living to our selves, and living to Christ are opposed; and not living to our selves, implyes a denying of our selves; and sayes the Apostle, 1*Cor.*6.19,20. *Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price*; Therefore let it not be your work to live to your selves, but *to glorifie God in your bodies and in your spirits, which*

are

re Gods. 2*ly.* It is called for, as a great part, nd someway as the whole of our likeneſs, and onformity to Chriſt, who was the greateſt exmple, and higheſt patern of the exerciſe of this Grace; and how often find we this thus preſſed? s *Matth.* 11. 28. *Learn of me, for I am meek nd lowly of heart*; and *Philip.* 2. 5. *Let this mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus,* And what was that? *who being* (ſayeth the Apoſtle) *in the form of God, thought it no robbery o be equal with God, but made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant,* &c. Herein did his wonderful Self-denyed ſtooping appear, that being *equal with God*, he deſcended, as it were, from that height, to the very loweſt ſtep of humiliation, and ſo *emptied himſelf*, and made himſelf in a manner nothing, in compariſon of what he was; *Let that mind therefore be in you*, ſayes the Apoſtle; The ſame exhortation we have propoſed, and preſſed, *Rom.* 15. 2, 3. *Let every one of us pleaſe his neighbour, for his good to edification; for even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf; but as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me*; His example in this is proponed for our imitation, and we are called, and obliged to ſtudy conformity thereunto; ſee alſo how Chriſt preſſeth it upon his Diſciples, *John* 13. *v.* 13, 14. 15. Who, when he had waſhed their feet affectionatly, humbly, and Self-denyedly, ſayes to them, *I have given you an example, that ye ſhould do as I have done to you.*

3*ly.* It is called for, as it is a requiſit qualification of Chriſts followers; and ſo we come to the 2*d Branch*, which I propoſed for clearing

of

of this matter; *Self-denyall* fits and qualifies for following of Christ, and for all other Duties; that before a man can to any purpose follow Christ, he must needs be thus qualified; for the clearing whereof, ye may consider, how it fits and qualifies a man for any Dutie that Christ calls him to. 1. In so far as it makes him single in taking directions from Christ, and suffers him not to be byassed, by himself, or by Selfie respect to any thing within or without himself, and this seems to be Christs great design, and scope as to *Peter* here, that before he can suitably follow him, he must be at a point with forgoing his life; Therefore in the following words, he says, *whosoever will save his life, shall lose it*, signifieing thereby, that a man that is not denyed to life; let be to the external comforts, conveniencies, and accommodations thereof, is not in a fit capacitie to do the Duties to which Christ calls him. 2*ly*. Consider, that as it qualifies for Duty, so it guards against snares; with the rightly Self-denyed man, death and life have no great weight, that by which he is mainly swayed being conscience of Duty, & regard to the glory of Christ. *He is so crucified to the world, and the world so crucified to him*, that it hath little or no influence on him, to make him flinch, or draw back from what Christ calls him to; Therefore *Paul* sayes, *Act*. 20. 24. In reference to Bonds, and Imprisonments, that were to attend him in every place; *None of these things move me, neither do I count my life dear unto my self, so that I may finish my course with joy*, &c. Selfiness exposes and casts a man open to many snares, and is like some intanglement, which Self-denyal rids him of, delivers

vers him from, & guards him againſt; Therefore
he Apoſtle exhorting *Timothy* to this, tells him,
hat *no man that goeth a warfare, intangles him-*
ſelf with the affairs of this life; The Self-denyed
an layes by all intanglements, that are ready
n every occaſion to be pull-backs to him from
uty; he ſhakes off theſe, and ſo is free, for the
arfare that he is called to; or he is like to a
an, who being well armed is not much, if at
ll hurt by ſtroaks. *Laſtly.* It qualifies by keep-
ng the man in ſolid peace, and ſweetly chear-
ng contentment, in enjoying what he hath: and
s there is no greater diſcouragement, impediment
nd obſtruction in following of Chriſt, than an-
xiety, fretting, and mal-contentment; So there
is no greater qualification fitting for following of
him, than inward calm ſerenity and peace, a-
riſing from a holy Self-denyedneſs of Spirit; for
ſuch a man hath not (in a manner) a will or
wit of his own to be thuarted and contradicted;
he hath no Self-pleaſure to be marred, no Self-
credit to be robbed of, no Self-eaſe to be diſ-
turbed, no Idol to be bereft of; he is denyed,
and dead, in a great meaſure to all theſe;
Therefore *Paul* ſayes, *Philip.* 4. 11. *I have*
learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be
content; He is meet for any condition, he can
eaſily digeſt all things, and fret at nothing; *He*
knows how to be abaſed, and how to abound, every
where, and in all things; he is inſtructed to be
full, and to be hungry, to abound, and ſuffer need,
and can do all things through Chriſt who ſtrengthens
him; and *v.* 18. *He has all, and abounds*: A moſt ex-
cellent and deſirable qualification of a man who
thus is, *as one having nothing*, and *yet poſſeſſing*
all

all things; He hath no anxious perplexing project, nor disquieting fore-casting thoughts that he leans to, or depends on, but is content with whatever God gives him, and carves out to him; he hath no Selfie-designs, and so can meet with no great disappointment; and therefore is fitted to suffer adversitie, and not to be cast down by it, and to bear prosperity, and not to be puft up by it; for he is not, as to his satisfaction bottomed on Creatures, but on Christ, and therefore is neither up nor down, as the Creature-comforts ebb or flow, stay or remove, but rests on a solid foundation.

And so we come to the 3*d Branch* proposed, *viz.* The absolute necessity of this Grace or Duty, which will appear, if we consider these things. 1. The nature of Selfiness, and of Christs way, and how inconsistent the one is with the other, Selfiness, or living to our selves, and living to Christ, being, (as we shew) always opposed one to another in the Scripture; Therefore a man must either deny himself, or deny living to Christ; when a man follows the counsel of Self; he rejects Christs counsel; where Self is taken in, Christ is keeped at the door; and where Self is set up, Christ is thrust down, and made, as it were, a stepping stone for Self to come at it's point, and as a stirrup for Self to mount to the Saddle by; Self subordinats all things to it self, and Christ among the rest, and therefore, whosoever would follow Christ, and live to him, must needs deny themselves. 2*ly.* Consider more particularly, the way wherin Christ calls his followers to walk, and the Duties that he requires of them, or the nature of the race that he wills them

them to run; and in every piece of it, we will find something oppofit and contradictory to Self; look to believing in Chriſt, it deſtroyes Self, neither can domining Selfineſs conſiſt with it, it quite excludes all boaſting on ſelfie accounts: Look to ſuffering for Chriſt, no man can *take up the Croſs and follow Chriſt*, till firſt *he deny himſelf*; will any man, unleſs he be ſelf-denyed in a conſiderable meaſure, think ye, hazard, or part with his Houſe, Land, Eſtate, Wife, Children, or Life, for that which carnal wiſdom and corrupt Self will be ready to repreſent, but as a little momentuous matter: as *Peter* ſaid to our Lord, ſo it will be ready to ſay, *Spare and pitie thy ſelf*; No, ſays Chriſt to *Peter*, and to all his followers, reſolve *to take up your Croſs, and follow me*; and in order thereto, *deny your ſelf*, your eaſe, profit, pleaſure, credit, *&c.* in a preſent World. 3*ly*. If we conſider the manner of doing theſe Duties which Chriſt calls for, this qualification of them will be found to be neceſſary, yea, whether it be doing or ſuffering; we are called to follow him therein in a ſingle ſincere and denyed manner, if we would pleaſe him, not only to do Duty, but to do it from a right principle, and to a right end; not only to bear the Croſs, but to bear it patiently, and chearfully; will ever a man think ye follow and honour Chriſt that way, if he get not victory over himſelf? will he ſuffer the loſs of his Goods, and take the ſpoiling of them joyfully, if they be his Idol? will he ſuffer reproach for Chriſt, if he cannot indure to have the leaſt word ſpoken to the prejudice of his name, on any account? will he endure to be put to wandering up and down,

without

without any certain dwelling place, in hunger, and cold, and nakedneſs, if he be addicted to his eaſe, and pleaſure? or will he hazard his Life, or turn his back on Houſes, Lands, Wife, and Children, if his affections be inordinatly carried forth towards them? 4ly. Conſider that the end which all Chriſts followers ſhould have before them, whether in doing, or ſuffering, is exceeding inconſiſtent with Selfineſs; for they are called to doing of Duties, in obedience to his command, and with regard to his honour, without incroaching, or trenching thereon; and when they have done all, and ſuffered to the yondmoſt; they are not to eſteem of themſelves the more highly on that account, but to reckon themſelves the more obliged to Chriſt, who hath thus helped, and honoured them; and not to be as the *Phariſees who did all to be ſeen of men*; They had two great ends before them, in all they did, which he will by no means endure in his followers; one was eſtimation and applauſe from men, the other ſome merited reward from God; Therefore, in oppoſition to theſe, Chriſt ſays, *Matth. 6. 13. Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand does*; in any good that ye do, be denyed to your ſelves, take no notice of it, as affecting eſtimation from it, as having confidence in it, let not your ſelves think that ye have done ſome worthy deed; For this end makes Duties that are good in themſelves, to be as no Duties on Gods account; *Ephraim* is reputed an empty vine, when he brings forth fruit only to himſelf: Now before we come to the *uſe*, take a word or two of Warning, or Caution; and 1. Conſider, that when we ſpeak of *Selfineſs*, or Self,

Self, we ſpeak not of it here, as it is taken for a ſinful corruption in man ſimply, and in it ſelf, but as it is lawful, yet venting it ſelf inordinatly, and ſo ſinfully; as a mans reſpect to his own well-being ſimply is lawful, but when it vents it ſelf, (as I ſaid) inordinatly, and ſinfully it is unlawfull, as when it comes in oppoſition to, or in competition with Chriſt, or any thing that is Chriſts; a man may, no doubt, lawfully ſeek to ſave his Life, or his Goods, or Name; but when it comes to this, that he muſt either hazard the loſs of theſe, or wound his own Conſcience, or the profeſſion of Religion, or deny Chriſt a teſtimony, when called for; in that caſe, he muſt be, as if he had not a Life, Goods, or Name, or Credit. 2*ly*. Conſider, That when we ſpeak of *Self-denyal*, it is not ſo to be underſtood, as if a man could be compleatly, & perfectly denyed to himſelf, or as if he could be quite without the reach of being hurt by any Tentation to Selfineſs; for, ſo long as corrupt nature, in the remainder of it, is in men, there will never be abſolute perfection in Self denyal; but that which we mean is, that a man ſincerely ſtudy to mortifie all inordinat reſpect to himſelf; That when a tentation to it aſſaults, he endeavour honeſtly to repell and refute it, and with holy peremptorineſs deny to grant what it ſeeks, nay, to abominat it, as Chriſt doth, that ſinful and unſeaſonable motion of *Peters*, for ſaving his Life; This is it that the ſaints are called to, even when the Tentation cometh, to ſuppreſſe, bear, and beat it down: Thus, our Lord, *John* 21. 18. notably reconciles theſe two, when he ſayes to *Peter*, *When thou waſt young, thou girdedſt thy ſelf, and walkedſt*

walkedſt whither thou wouldſt, but when thou ſhalt be old, thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thy hands, and another ſhall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldeſt not; thus he ſpoke, ſignifying by what death he ſhould glorifie God; *Peter* had a natural deſire, not to die a violent death, and therefore in this reſpect, *was led whither he would not*; yet it is ſaid, that *Peter*, by laying down his life, and ſuffering a violent death, glorified God, becauſe the debate he had with Self was decided in Chriſts favours, (to ſpeak ſo) and the tentation to pitie Self, was not hearkned to, but reſiſted and overcome.

In the *third* place, according to the method propoſed, we come to to the *uſes* of the Doctrine, which are *three*, the *firſt* whereof ſhews what is the Duty that the followers of Chriſt are called to. The *Second* exhorts to it. The *Third* reproves ſhort-coming in it, and diſcovers the riſe of this ſhort-coming.

The *Firſt uſe* then ſerves to ſhew the great Duty that the follower of Chriſt is called to, or what a Chriſtian ſhould be, even a Self-denyed man; If we follow the Duty in application, it will be found to comprehend many things; more generally. 1. It is a complication of all, or at leaſt of many Graces, and Duties, as of Patience, Submiſſion, Singleneſs, Sincerity, Meekneſs, Humility, or lowlineſs of Mind, thinking well, and highly of God, and meanly of our ſelves, *&c.* As it is a complication of many Graces, and Duties; ſo 2*ly*. It is an antidot againſt many vices, and evils, againſt Pride, High-conceit, Haſtineſs, Paſſion (which is not taken much heed to) Fretting, Grudging, Diſcontentment, Diſquietneſs, Anxiety,

Anxiety, and many moe evils, which we will not now particularize; But shall more particularly draw the *use* to a few things, which the Scripture points at, and which a man must necessarily be denyed to, or else he is not fit to follow Christ. 1. He must be denyed to the principles of carnal Reason, to his own wit, to the counsel of flesh and blood, he must not consult therewith (as the great Apostle tells us, *Gal.* 1. 16. he heeded it not, and which is one of the main things intended here;) he must not be much up nor down, with external conveniencies, or inconveniencies, or events, which carnal reason useth to stretch very broad. 2*ly*. He must be denyed to his credit and estimation, and in that, be like to a little Child; and in this respect, he that is Minister and Servant of all shall be greatest of all; he must nor be like the *Pharisees, who sought the uppermost seats at feasts, and greetings in the market*, Nor love, or seek to be called *Rabbi*, but he must be content to bear reproach, and not to fret nor canker under it: 3*ly*, He must be denyed to his ease, outward accommodation, or pleasure; he must not seek to please himself; his great design must not be to have, or maintain an easie life to himself in the World; but he must be content, to accept of any condition God carves out to him herein. 4*ly*. He must be denyed to his profit, as he must be crucified to all creature-comforts in general, so to this in particular; he must not seek his own things only, but the things of others also. 5*ly*. He must be denyed to his own Righteousness, Gifts, Privlledges and Parts, to his good works, and whatever is commendable, and good in himself

ſelf, and ſo account of himſelf, as if he had then not, counting all theſe things to be but *loſs and dung that he may win Chriſt, and be found in him.* 6*ly.* He muſt be denyed to his own ſtrength and ability, and to Self-confidence, deadned to every good thing in himſelf, ſo as to reſt on it. 1 *Cor.* 1. 9. *we received* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *the ſentence of death in our ſelves, that we might learn not to truſt in our ſelves*; Truſting in our ſelves, is a very ordinary fault, and it's a hard matter to go about Dutie, without lipning to our ſelves. 7*ly.* He muſt be denyed to all inordinat love and affection, to all near and dear natural relations, to Wife, Huſband, Father, Mother, Children, Brother and Siſter,, yea, and to his own life alſo, however love to theſe be not only lawful, but a commanded and commendable Duty, yet when they come in competition with Chriſt, and any concern of his, we muſt carry towards them, as if we hated them.

The 2*d uſe* ſerves for exhortation to this Duty; Take, O take Chriſt for your Patern, and learn at him, to deny your ſelves, and let his example be a motive to ſtir you up to it, as well as a Coppie and Patern for your imitation; For 1. Chriſt *came not to do his own will, but the will of him that ſent him.* 2*ly.* In all his converſation, *he pleaſed not himſelf; but, as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached his father fell on him.* 3*ly.* The manner of his deportment was in much patience, meekneſs and lowlineſs of Spirit, *when he was buffeted he bleſſed, & prayed even for his perſecutors, when he was ſpitted on & reviled, he reviled not again.* 4*ly.* Let us look to him in his Sufferings, O! how ſubmiſſive is he there? *Father* (ſayeth he

he most sweetly) *not my will, but thine be done;* Was there ever such a Cup of Wrath put in the hand of any to drink, as was put in his? at which, though he had a sinless natural reluctance, yet he will not have a will of his own, in that case, but submits to his Fathers will; he will not hear on that ear (to speak so with reverence) but with his mouth he contradicts the sinless reluctance, and aversion of his holy innocent humane nature. 5*ly.* In a word, look to him in his Birth, all along in his Life, in his Suffering, and Dying, there is nothing in all these, but it speaks out somewhat of his denying himself: as all the steps and degrees of his humiliation, and stouping so very low, smells strong of Self-denyal, so they serve to teach his Disciples, how to follow him in that way, and to provock and stir them up thereto: Therefore, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we exhort you to study this Lesson well, and to learn it of him; even to live so in the World, as if there were nothing in it to tempt you; to live as if ye were dead, & as if all were dead about you, in respect of being swayed by any inordinat respect to your selves; and so much the rather, because, at this time, God seems to be calling more especially to it, the Cross being at our door, to which there will be no kindly stouping without *Self-denyall*, Men will not without this indure to be troubled with quartering of Souldiers in their houses, let be to lose all they have in the world, which they have been long a winning; they will rather reason thus with themselves, What will become of us, and of our houses and families, if we hold by this, or if we do not the other thing? we will therefore

comply

comply, and not ſtrive againſt the ſtream, & there by bring ruine on our ſelves, and ours: make therefore Chriſt your Patern, and believe, that as he requireth this of you at all times, ſo in a ſpecial manner at this time, when the tryal is come, and Self fawns and hangs on us, pleading for Self-pity, and perſwaſion: And to preſſe this exhortation, conſider the neceſſity of it, *If any man* (ſayes the Lord) *will follow me, let him deny himſelf*; If ye think Chriſt worthy the following, ye muſt reſolve to part with *Self*; the young rich man muſt ſell all that he hath, and take up his Croſs, and follow Chriſt, or elſe part with Chriſt, and go back to the World, and that will be a woful parting; It is on this account ordinarily, that men part with Chriſt, whether it be eternally, or for a time only; ſuch as will not deny themſelves in Juſtification, they deprive themſelves of Chriſts Righteouſneſs; ſuch as will adhere to the World, will get no more; Selfineſs made *Demas* forſake Chriſt, and imbrace a preſent World; It made many to preach circumciſion, to eſchew perſecution, and to take a wrong way in the matter of Juſtification, as the Apoſtle ſhews, *Gal 6.* It prevailed that far with *Peter*, as to make him deny his Maſter. But ye will readily ſay, this ſeems to be very hard, not only in reference to the end, which is heaven and glory, but in reference to the way unto it, to tell men, that they muſt deny themſelves, ere ever they can well enter, let be proceed in the way to heaven; There is here a twofold great difficultie, not only to deny our Eſtates, Friends, Relations, Natural Reaſon, Wit, Will, Senſe, Opinion, Reputation (that ſticks cloſe and long) but

ut also to be content to be accounted and cal-
d fools, and to be mocked, and cryed out up-
n, as the very *offscourings of the world*, even
o deny Life it self, and to choose Death, even a
iolent Death: I confess this is indeed hard, even
ery hard to Flesh and Blood; but I must also
y, that it is a hard and difficult business, to fol-
ow Christ, and to continue in following of him,
all his Tentations; Remember therefore, and
onder the one, as well as the other; when ye
e disposed to think it hard to deny your selves,
emember, and consider also, that it is hard,
nd difficult to win to Heaven, *It's a strait gate,*
nd a narrow way that leads to it, and but few
nd it; It's hard to keep a good Conscience in
ollowing him, and therefore it's no marvel,
hat the qualifications seem to be hard, that are
equired of all them that are called to walk in
hat way: Yet let me say further, that though
be hard and difficult simply considered,
t it is not so comparatively considered, *viz.*
us, That a man must resolve either to deny
imself, or renounce and part with precious
esus Christ, *that pearl of great price*; is there any
omparison betwixt Self and him? *with whom,*
we suffer, we shal also reign with him; whom if we
m, he will also deny us; If we resolve to live
ithout regard to him, and prefer Self to him,
sting the Ballance to the side of our selves, he
ill live without us, and rid himself of us; doth
ot the word subjoined here, a little after
e Text plainly hold forth the absolute ne-
ssity of Self-denyal, and the dreadful prejudice
Self-seeking, Self-love, and of Self-preference?

Him that denyes me before men, him will I deny before my Father, and the holy angels; If we consider aright, and believe the incomparable worth and matchless excellency of Christ, and the unspeakable advantages that wait on Self-denyal, following of him, especially at the close of our race and course, with the sweet facility in running of it out, that his promised assisting-grace can cause, it will not be found so very hard, and insuperably difficult a bussiness to follow Christ in the way of Self-denyal, as carnal reason represents it to be, to make men skar at it and decline it, the great gain that comes at last, with to an infinit over-plus, make up all the loss.

The 3*d use* serves, to reprove our short-coming in this great Duty of following Christ; and to shew the rise of it; *First* I say, it is ground of reproof for, and points at our great disconformity to Christ, in this Grace of Self-denyal. Ah! should we not, as dear Children, follow him therein? if so, how dreadfully disconform are we unto him? How lamentably little are we like to the name that we bear? We are called *Christians*, and are found very unlike Christ, living much, or altogether to our selves, swayed by Self, and Carnal Reason, in our walk, fretting and foaming under the Cross, discontent with our Condition and Lot, selfie in our speaking and dealing, unwilling to quite our own Will, come of it what will, resolute to serve our own pleasure and ease, and to be somewhat in the World, though we should be eternally ruined thereby: When our Grace is stretched even to the utmost length of the Charity that we

can

can warrantably give it, what observable vestige, or footstep will it be found to have of beautiful conformity to Christ, and particularly of conformity to him in *Self-denyall*, wherein *Christians* ought in a special manner to resemble *Christ*? We have been long professing to follow Christ, and yet, alas! we have scarcely stepped this first step; what meaneth the fainting, and fear that is at but the noise of trouble? what meaneth the strong propension and bensil that is to keep off the Cross, though with the loss of a good Conscience? Certainly it flows from Selfishness, and from our not being as weaned Children; What meaneth the great conceit that we have of our selves, and of any thing we have or do? *when the left hand should not know what the right hand doth*; if we do any good deed, all the World (as it were) must hear and know of it; This sure, argues a great deal of Selfiness; O! then let us all be ashamed of our great disconformity, and unlikeness to the Patern, and of our lamentable short-coming in this respect. 2*ly*. I say, it discovers to us, and lets us see whence it cometh, that we thrive so ill, and come so little speed in following of Christ; It's even from this, some one Self-Idol or another, and till this be denyed, we will not thrive, nor make progress in following Christ; Some one concern of Self or another, gets too much of the hearts love and esteem; There is therefore a necessity of being denyed and mortified to all these, otherwise we will still be clogged, intangled, made to halt and stick, and be keeped from going forward in the way of following Christ; I shall clo-

and

sllow-

this Discourse with one word of advertisemen
and it is this, that ye would not look at Se
denyall, as a common (if I may speak so) Gra
or Duty, that is easily reached, and come b
but as such an one that is (as it were) the r
from which many other Graces spring, and t
foundation on which many other Duties are bu
and as having in it a pre-disposing fitness for e
ry other Duty; and withall, as being that whi
calms, and quiets the mind of a Christian, a
guards his heart against the perplexity, a
torturing anxiety and vexation that in a time
tryal and trouble, carnal and unmortified pers
are troubled with; Now God himself help
to it, and to more of it for Christs sa
AMEN.

SERMON VI

Matthew 16. 24. *Then said Jesus unto his d
ciples, if any man will come after me, let h
deny himself, and take up his cross, and f
low me.*

OUR Lord Christ having discover
somewhat of the temper and d
position of his Disciples, and
lowers, to be very loath, shy a
scarring to meet with the C
as *Peters* advice to him plainly manifested;
plyes himself to instruct, and give them th
Lesson for the time to come, how they may
only get free from that propension to shift
Crosses and difficulties, that occur in the w
of Duty, and of following him, that is thro

incident to all men, but also how they may get themselves sweetly composed for profitable, and comfortable meeting with, and going thorow these Difficulties and Crosses, and guarded against such sinful scarring at them; If *any man* (sayeth he) *will come after me*, in hope to reign with me eternally hereafter, he must not seek himself; but on the contrary, *must deny himself*, and study to be without all inordinat respect to himself; yea, he must be so far from seeking himself; that he must denyedly *take up his cross* (and that *dayly*, as *Luke* hath it) *and follow me*; And this is the 2*d*. Qualification which Christ requireth of his followers, That we are now to speak a little to.

The Words indeed are borrowed, and metaphorical, yet they set out obviously enough the afflictions that Gods People meet with in following him, in the way of Duty. The Cross properly is that Tree, or piece of Tree made use of in these times, for executing and putting men to death, by crucifying them, and so it signifies, and sets forth not only a painful, but also an ignominious and shameful Death; It is said of Christ, *Heb.* 12. 2. That he suffered pleasantly the pain of the Cross, and regarded not the shame of it; Hence it is ordinarly taken in the Scriptures of the new Testament, to hold out the great and sore, the painful and shameful sufferings and afflictions that the followers of Christ are called to lay their account to meet with, and which they often actually meet with, himself having suffered, and died this way, as he was man; To this purpose sayeth the Lord, *Matth.* 10. 38. *He that taketh not his cross and*

followeth after me, is not worthy of me; That is he that is not content to meet with any sort of suffering in following of me, even such as I myself met with from men, is not meet to follow me. *His Cross* implyes not only suffering, and affliction in the general, but that sort of affliction which every follower of Christ in particular must resolve, & lay his account to meet with; The Cross that is appointed & shaped out for him, as to such and such circumstances in particular, *For as much* (saith the Apostle, 1 *Thes.* 3. 3. *as ye your selves know that we are appointed thereunto*: Taking up of the Cross, is a following forth of the same similitude, to point out this, that as a follower of Christ must resolve to have the Cross on his back dayly, so he must not unduely decline, or seek to shift it, neither must he be drawn and dragged to it with grudging and repining, but he must be ready pleasantly to take it up, and patiently to bear it, when ever he is called to it, be ready to submit to every cross dispensation that the Lord shal please to carve out to him.

In the Words, we have *three* main things implyed. 1. The Lot and Measure that the followers of Christ may meet with, and should lay their account to meet with in following of him, the Captain of their Salvation, and that is the *Cross*. 2*ly*. The Duty that Believers are called to in reference to the Cross, and these afflictions that they are to meet with, *Let him take up his cross*, and that *dayly*, as *Luke* hath it. *Chap.* 9. 23. 3*ly*. We have this Duty considered, as it stands betwixt these two, *Let a man deny himself*, and *Let him follow me*; for thus the words relate to the

the Scope that Christ drives at in this place.

As for the *first* of these, it contains in it several things, as 1. That Believers are to reckon to meet with sad afflictions, in following Christ, and no less than such as are both painful and shameful, and accompanied with reproach, compared here to sufferings on the Cross. 2*ly*. That they are to lay their account to meet with these continually, they must resolve to take up their Cross *dayly*. 3*ly*. That there are (beside the general afflictions of the People of God) some proper and peculiar to every one of them, every man is to have his share of the publick, general, and common Crosses and Afflictions, and his particular Cross beside. 4*ly*. That they must resolve to meet with these, even in the following of Christ, and while they are in their Duty; we shal take in all these in this one Doctrine. *That Believers, even in their following of Christ, and in the doing the Duties they are called to, are ordinarly accompanied with considerable crosses, afflictions and difficulties*; Christs Words laying it down, as a conclusion not to be controverted, that his followers must resolve to bear the Cross dayly, and with no less certification than that, otherwise they cannot come after him, give a very clear rise to the Doctrine; and the truth of it being such, that none do professedly call it in question, let be down-right deny it, that it might be judged unnecessary, and superfluous, to offer at any proof of it; yet the practice of most calling for it as necessary, we shall speak a little to the clearing, and confirming of the point; the truth whereof is manifested by the Scriptures of

the Old and New Testament, and by the experience of the People of God, in all Ages: There are *three* sorts of afflictions that the People of God meet with, & that are spoken of in the Scriptures. 1. Some that are properly chastisements 1 *Cor.* 1. 32. So the *Corinthians* are said *to be chastened of the Lord*, for prophaning the Lords Table, *That they may not be condemned with the world*; These are not the afflictions, so much at least, meaned here. 2*ly*. Some are properly tryals that the people of God meet with, in following of their Duty, and not properly for their Duty, and while they are walking tenderly; Such were holy *Jobs* afflictions, which he met with, while he was sincerely and faithfully, in a great measure about his Duty to God and man, very sharp ones: neither are these so much intended here. 3*ly*. Some that Believers meet with from men, because of their faithfull following, and cleaving close to their Duty, while they suffer in their Estates, Persons, *&c.* for well-doing; These are the Crosses and Afflictions mainly meant here, though we would not exclude the former sorts; they must resolve, both in their Duties, and for their Duties, to meet with the Cross, to be reproached and persecuted; Take but one passage out of the Old Testament, *Psal.* 44. *v.* 22. Where the People of God say to him, *For thy sake we are counted as sheep for the slaughter, and all this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsly in thy covenant*: and this is so ordinary a Lot, that *Paul* cites it, *Rom.* 8. 36. As a truth verified in his time, and to be verified in all times following; And if we come to the New Testament,

ment, beſide that juſt now mentioned, *Rom.* 8. See 1 *Cor.* 4. 9. *I thank God* (ſayes the Apoſtle) *he hath ſet forth us Apoſtles laſt, as it were appointed to death, for we are a ſpectacle to the world, and to angels and men; we are fools for Chriſts ſake; but ye are wiſe; we are weak, but ye are ſtrong; ye are honourable, but we are deſpiſed; even unto this preſent hour, we both hunger and thirſt, and are naked, and buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; being reviled, we bleſs; being perſecuted, we ſuffer; being defamed, we intreat, we are made as the filth of the world, and are as the off-ſcourings of all things unto this day.* And ſee how he inlarges this, as the way of his fighting, and doing Duty. 2 *Cor.* 6. *In much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in ſtripes, and impriſonments, in tumults and labours,* &c. And 2 *Cor.* 11. 23. *In labours more abundant, in ſtripes above meaſure, in priſons more frequent, in deaths often, of the Jews I ſuffered five times fourtie ſtripes ſave one, thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I ſtoned, thrice I received ſhipwrack, a night and a day I have been in the depth, in journieing often, in perills by water, in perrills by robbers, in perills by my own countrey men, in perrills by the heathen, in perills in the city, in the wilderneſs, in the ſea, and by falſe brethren,* &c. So *Heb.* 10. 32,33. Where there is *a great fight of afflictions* ſpoken of, *Partly*, while Believers were made *a gazing-ſtock by reproaches, and afflictions, partly while they became companions of them who were ſo uſed; and ſuffered the ſpoil of their goods joyfully*, and *Heb.* 11. throughout; How largely is this Doctrine followed forth,

Chap. 12. And all the Cloud of believing Witnesses brought in, in the exercise of their Faith, walking thorow Sufferings; yea, it's so received a Truth, that in the Old and New Testament, we find it laid down (as it were) in Maximes, *Psal.* 34. 19. *Many are the afflictions of the righteous*: *Acts.* 14. 22. *Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God*; 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*: No man that will resolve to keep a good Conscience but he must resolve to have this for his Lot; and we find both the Old and New Testament joyned together, for verification of this Truth, *Gal.* 4. 29. *But as then, he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, so is it now*; These that have nothing of Gods Grace in them, will still persecute those that have it, the Seed of the Serpent will always persecute the Seed of the Woman, so that the followers of Christ are not, even in their doing of Duty, exempted from Crosses and Afflictions, and that of the sharpest, and most searching nature: if it were needful to follow forth the confirmation of this by reasons, several might be given, but take only a few of many, in some passages of Scripture; the *first* whereof, is, *Rom.* 8. 29. *Whom he did fore-know those he predestinat, to be conformed to the image of his Son*; Who hath chalked out their way wherein they must follow him through many afflictions to Glory, that so they may be made conform to him, both in holiness, and in suffering; which holy Image of his in them, is the Butt of the wicked worlds malice, and persecution; I

say

say, he makes use of afflictions, to further their spiritual conformity to him, who, as *he learned obedience by suffering*, (though he needed not) so Believers are brought up at the same School, that their haughtiness may be laid, their dulness rouzed and helped, and they taught obedience. The 2*d* place and reason is, In *Deut.* 8. 2, 3. Where *Moses* gives this for a reason, why the Lord keeped *Israel* so long in the wilderness, even *that he might humble them, and prove them, and know what was in their heart*, &c. Where *first*, we see that the design of afflictions is to humble Gods People; whilest all things go well with them they are ready to be puft up, & to think well of themselves, and of their duties, but God brings on crosses to put them upon a search, and to make a discovery to them of their sin, and so layes their pride, and in this respect there is a necessity of affliction. 2*ly*. That all afflictions come to prove the People of God, and to try what is in their heart; not so, but that God knows exactly what is in their heart, but he will needs have them to know it also; Believers are ready to say in their prosperity, (as *David* did, *Psal.* 30.) *We shall never be moved*; and never to think of being shaken; but God causeth, or permits, a Gross-wind to blow, and then somewhat comes whereof they did not think, and makes them change their tune, and say, *Thou hide thy face, and I was troubled*; And this is both profitable, & needful that they may know that they are not so stable, and immovable as they imagined. 3*ly*. That they may know, *That man lives not by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God*,

That

That is, That man lives not ſo much by outward means, and ſecond cauſes, as by Gods bleſſing; which is another uſe and end of afflictions, even to bring his People off from leaning to ſecond cauſes and means, to a more immediat dependance on God himſelf; and to make them look beyond plowing, ſowing, harveſt, labour, our own diligence, pains, ſkill, prudent foreſight, and fore-caſting, care and dexterous management, for through-bearing, direction, guiding, and proviſion in all things they ſtand in need of; for if proſperity went alwayes along with the Dutie, men would readily be byaſſed, and inclined to follow dutie for wrong ends; therefore the Lord will have it otherwiſe, that it may be known who they are that follow him, for proſperity attending duty, and who for the right end. The 3d and laſt place, (containing another reaſon) which I ſhal name, is if that which we have, *Rom.* 5. 3. *we glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience*, &c. We are not troubled at afflictions (as if he ſaid) becauſe we get ſo much good of them; and what is that good? Tribulation draweth forth Grace into exerciſe, and makes it to grow, which did before much languiſh, and in a manner lye by; there are ſeveral Graces in a Chriſtian, that are not (to ſay ſo) in ſuch a capacity of acting, and being exerciſed, as when they are under the Croſs; what hath patience to do, that hath not affliction, and tribulation to try and exerciſe it? or how ſhal experience grow without patience? and how ſhal hope grow ſtrong and ſhine, where there is little or no experience

experience? therefore Tribulation comes and works Patience, and Patience Experience, and Experience Hope; Tribulation not only affords occasion and matter to Patience; but through Gods blessing works it, by tameing the Person, bringing low the height and haughtiness of his Spirit, and making him put his mouth in the dust; (and this is one good that comes by afflictions) and *Patience* again *bringeth forth experience*, when a man is brought to a suffering Lot, and by suffering calmed, and meekned, he gets many experiences of Gods love, tender care, and vigilant providence; that he would rather have than want his sufferings; he gets the experience of Gods faithfulness, in making good his Promises, in sustaining and bearing thorow under suffering; and as many troubles as he hath, he gets as many out-gates, neither would he want such sweet experience, whatever his Crosses may be, that he falls under; and this is a *Second* Good that comes by affliction; a *Third* Good is, that *experience brings forth hope*; For when Christians are accustomed to afflictions, and find the good of them, and get fresh experience of Gods faithfulness, and love under them, they fear not so much at them; for the blessed out-gates that they have gotten before, give them ground to hope for moe; and this makes them pleasantly, chearfully, and couragiously to march through all their Afflictions and Tribulations.

The *First use* serves, to discover the great unsuitableness of our practice to this Truth; There is not any Truth less controverted, nor more confirmed, How comes it then to passe, that

that we look upon the Croſs, eſpecially when it comes for Duty, as it were a ſtrange and uncouth thing, whereof we had never heard before, or, as if God had oblidged himſelf to keep the Croſs from of us? *Think it not ſtrange* (ſayeth the Apoſtle 1 *Pet.* 4. 12.) *concerning the firie tryal, as if ſome ſtrange thing happened unto you*; O! do not think your ſelves exempted from, or ſet quite without the reach of any Tryal, Affliction, or Tribulation that any of the People of God have met with before you, or in your time.

The 2*d. uſe* ſerves, to reprove our too great averſeneſs from, and ſtarting at Tryals, Croſſes, Afflictions, and Tribulations, Let us put our ſelves to it, and enquire how theſe two can ſtand together, to wit, the certainty of their ſuffering perſecution, that will live Godly, and our fancieing that a godly man, not only may, but muſt be free of perſecution? 2*ly.* if it be a certain truth, that the People of God muſt enter into his kingdom through much Tribulation,, how comes it to be ſo little believed, and that ſo very few are found laying their account with it in particular? Is not this undenyably evident, by ſo much ſinfully diſtempering fear of it, and ſeeking anxiouſly, and unwarrantably to ſhift and ſtave it off ere it come, by thinking ſhame of it, and freting under it, when it comes, and by impatient longing to be freed from it? alas, theſe are ſhreud and ſad evidences, that it is not really and throughly believed, that *the kingdom of God muſt needs be entered into through much tribulation.*

The 3*d. uſe* ſerves, to provock us to wonder, that ſeing Chriſt thus bargans and capitulats with

with all his followers, without exception, that *they take up their croſs dayly and follow him*, through the ſtraiteſt and darkeſt ſteps of trouble; we are ſo little actually put to it, for every day that we are free of ſome great Croſs, is more than condition, and ſpeaks Chriſt (to ſay ſo) to be better than his word; every day of ſuch freedom layes a new obligation on us, to be thankful, and to bear our little Croſſes the more patiently; to this purpoſe, the Apoſtle beſpeaks the Chriſtian *Hebrews, Chap.* 12. 4. *Ye have not yet reſiſted unto blood, in ſtriving againſt ſin*; It was bleſſed Jeſus his lot, and of multituds of his Martyrs to ſuffer to Blood and Death; ſhould we then, becauſe of our little pettie ſuffering, fret and be anxious? It's both our ſin and ſhame, it's but very little that we have yet ſuffered in compariſon of what we ſhould lay our account with, and in compariſon with what others have ſuffered; why then is there ſo much un-warrantable ſhifting of ſuffering, and ſo much repineing and grudging under it, as if God dealt more hardly with us than with others?

The 4*th. uſe* ſerves for warning, That ſince laying account with ſuffering is ſo neceſſary, ye would not think of getting it ſhifted, going about too diligently, by carnal wiles to ſhift, becomes a ſnare to many; let never your ſelves think, that ye can live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, and eſcape all ſuffering and perſecution; if ye ſhift Chriſts Croſs ſinfully, ye will bring Chriſts curſe on you; This is the great guilt of the body of our Land, and of this Place, that many having in a manner, laid by the Croſs of Chriſt, dare hazard on the

curſe

curse of Christ without dread of it; This will be found to be a foolish exchange, it's far better, without all doubt, to follow Christ with the Cross, than to meet him and the Curse; they will never repent it, who have chosen affliction rather than Sin, and to follow Christ with the Cross rather than to comply with any sinful course or practice; O! how dreadful will it be to all them (under whatsoever specious and plausable like pretences they may do it) that have by refusing to follow Christ, bearing his Cross, run themselves into the danger of his Curse, the Lord save us from such desperat folly and madness.

The 5th. and *Last use* (which may be the *First Doctrine*, from the *Second* part of the Text, to wit, the Duty called for from Christs followers, which is, *to take up their Cross*) is, *That since there are none who ingadge to be followers of Christ, but must resolve before hand, on whatsoever difficulties they may meet with in the way; and since the Cross is so certain, they would not unsuitably strive against it, but prepare for to take it up, and carry it after him; what man*, (saith our Lord, *Luke* 14.) *going to build a house, sits not down first to count the cost; or, what king going to make war with another King, sits not down first, to consult, if he be able to meet with him*, &c. Where his Scope is so obviously to this purpose, that we need not say any thing more particularly to that notable passage; The reason of the Doctrine is, because not only is the Cross necessary, and unavoidable, but also because those are so foolish, as not to prepare for it before it come, will very readily be surprised with it, when it comes

comes; if they be not by such previous, serious forecast and resolution at a point, established, and ready armed to encounter the Cross, when it marcheth up furiously against them, they will be taken at a great disadvantage, and will not be able to stand it out, but will readily run, and be routed; hence it is, that in a day of tryal, so many miscarry, and fall off. If it be here inquired what I mean, by preparing for the Cross ere it come? Ye may take it in these few directions; the *First* whereof is, That we would indeavour to have our interest in Christ clear, otherwise it's hardly possible that we can indure the Cross; hence it is, that the Apostle bespeaks the Christian *Hebrews, Chap.* 10. *v.* 34. *Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in your selves, that ye have in heaven a better and enduring substance*; this was one main ground, on which they did so chearfully suffer the spoiling of their goods; the suitably indeavoured certainty of the one greatly facilitats the suffering of the other. *2ly.* We would through Grace study to carry denyedly, in reference to all earthly injoyments and comforts; we would, as the Apostle exhorts, 1 *Cor.* 7. *v.* 31. *use the world as not abusing it*; We would so use all things in the world, that we may not be brought under the power of any of them, holding a loose grip of them all, ready to forego our hold of Wife, Children, Houses, Lands, Money, even of all Relations, and Injoyments, as if they were none of ours, when the Lords calls to it; In a word, we would seek *to be crucified with Christ, and to have the world crucified to us, and our selves crucified to*

the

the world, and weaned from it; a notable preparation for bearing the Croſs. 3*ly*. We would ſtudy to be much taken up with the ſerious thoughts of things not ſeen, to come, and eternal; to admit thoſe things to have great weight with us, and to be much converſant with them, even to have our hearts and our converſations in heaven; This was it that greatly influenced *Moſes* refuſal to be called the Son of *Pharaohs* daughter, and his choice of a ſhare of the People of God their affliction, even *the reſpect that he had to the recompence of reward*, *Heb.* 11. 24, 25, 26. And the Apoſtle *Paul* gives this as a reaſon why he made ſo light account of affliction, 2 *Cor.* 4. *While* (ſayeth he) *we look not at the things that are ſeen, but at the things that are not ſeen, for the things that are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are eternall*; Few ſerious and ſtayed thoughts of Heaven, little delightful dwelling in the contemplation of the approaching full manifeſtation of the glorious priviledges of the Sons of God, with much minding of earthly things and groveling in the earth, make the Croſs ſeem very terrible, and even intolerable; whereas heavenly mindedneſs, and much looking at things unſeen and eternal, notably ward off the dint of the blowes of afflictions, that they do not much get in on the heart, to divert from following of Chriſt, by anxious and vexatious thoughts about them. 4*ly*. We would ſtudy to be much in forecaſting of, and in acquainting our ſelves with the ſaddeſt difficulties ere they come; not looking at our ſelves, as exeemed from the heavieſt and moſt ſadly circumſtantiated afflictions that any of Gods

Gods People have met with; Thus shal that which is less be the better born, unjust shame & reproach will not be thought so very much of, neither will there be such startling at a cross word, nay, not at Bonds and Imprisonment, and spoiling of Goods, when we have laid our account in our thoughts to meet with the greatest afflictions: God hath hitherto keeped the greatest part of us from any very considerable personal Tryalls, and Tribulations, and we are ready to look at these as being quite worn out of use; but we would bring them near, and habituat our selves in our thoughts to them, and by Christian bearing lesser ones, be fitting our selves against the coming of the great Cross and Tryal; if we cannot indure little pettie Tryals, such as a frown, a check, or a word of reproof from others, how will we behave, when it comes to greater Sufferings if the running with Foot-men weary us, how will we be able to contend with Horses? If we faint in the land of peace, what will we do, when it comes to the flowings of *Jordan?* 2*ly*. When many of you are upon every trifling occasion, chideing, jangling and brauling in your Families, and every smal matter awakens Passion; and when we are not learning Christianly to bear the smallest things, how can we expect to be able to bear the greatest Crosses? It were very desirable, that we made it our study to accustome our selves dayly to bear our little Crosses suitably; when injuries are offered to us, though we be not called to be outterly sensless under them, yet we would learn to carry them with Christian meekness, and moderation; but when men allow themselves in their

Passion

Passion, and Revenge, because of Injuries done them, and proudly scorn and disdain to take affront, this teacheth proud Self a habitual way of carrying thus on every occasion, and mightily unfits for future greater Tryals.

From the Duty that a follower of Christ is called to. *Observe. 2dly. That the followers of Christ would heartily welcome, and chearfully submit unto the cross that they may meet with for his sake, and on his account: Let him take up his cross.* Intimating That he is not to reason or dispute against, nor sinfully to shift it, neither is he reluctantly to be drawn and dragged to it, but to take it up willingly and pleasantly (when called to it) and when it is taken on, to carry it contentedly and chearfully, without all grudging, fretting, or repining: There are several things that do both confirm and press this point. As 1. The great good that comes by willing, ready and chearful taking up, and bearing of Christs Cross, such as the tryall and improvement of Graces, furthered conformity to Christ, access to glorifie him, much of the Spirit of God, and of Glory resting on the Sufferer, the honest Sufferer for Christ, even all the peaceable fruits of Righteousness, that afterward wait on them that are exercised thereby; It's true, no affliction is for the present joyous, but grievous, and even the Believer in Christ may find difficultie, yea, not only so, but much averseness, and resistance from the unrenewed part, but the regenerat part makes him patiently and pleasantly to stoup; Thus the Lord sayes of *Peter, That he should be carried whither he would not*; There was in him not only a purely natur-

all

averſion from Suffering, (ſuch was in bleſſed Jeſus himſelf, without any the leaſt ſinfull diſcompoſure) but ſomewhat culpably ſo, through the remainder of indwelling Corruption, but the regenerat part, through aſſiſting Grace prevailed, ſo that he glorified God by his Suffering of a violent Death. A 2*d.* Thing that confirmeth, and preſſeth this, is, not only the great good and benefit that cometh to us by it, which makes *Paul to glorie in the midſt of tribulations*, and *James* to exhort Chriſtians, *to count it all joy when they fall into divers tentations*; but alſo the great and honourable priviledge that is in being counted worthy to ſuffer for his name, *rejoyce* (ſayes *Peter*) *in as much as ye are partakers of Chriſts ſufferings*: And if we conſider a little more particularly, we will find, that there are a great many priviledges, that wait honeſt and chearful Sufferings for Chriſt, beſide all the good of it. As namely 1. When God puts the honour on ſome to be inſtrumental in high and honourable pieces of ſervice to him, particularly in ſuffering for him, which is moſt honourable; giving them not only to believe in Chriſt, but alſo to ſuffer for his ſake, (as it is, *Philip.* 1. 29. Where there is an obſervable gradation) all Believers have not this honour. 2*dly.* There is a meaſure of myſtical Chriſts Sufferings to be filled up; For as Chriſt, is not compleat without his body, the Church, ſo his Sufferings in that reſpect are not compleat till that appointed meaſure be filled up. So, *Col.* 1. 24. Believers are ſaid, *to fill up what is behind of the ſufferings of Chriſt* myſtical, and there is thereby a great priviledge, and piece of honour

put

upon them; It's true, their Sufferings are neither meritorious nor satisfactory to Divine Justice that is already done to their hand, it being the peculiar and incommunicable priviledge of the personal sufferings of Christ, but to be joyned with him in the same work, in order to the same general end, *viz.* The glorifying of God, is doubtless a great honour. A 3*d*. Priviledge is that Believers Sufferings for Christ make way according to Gods dispotal, and order of things, for more eminent degrees of Glory, *Matth.* 5. 11. 12. It's true, they merit none, yet he hath in his wisdom ordered that connection, and promised, that *if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him*; and *if we suffer with him, that we shall also be glorified together with him*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 12. *Rom.* 8. 17. And says the Lord to his Disciples, *Luke* 22. 28, 29. To this purpose, *Ye are they that have continued with me in my tentations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom*, &c. It is not indeed by way of merit, but by way of connection, that much Suffering is recompensed with much Glory: *It's a righteous thing with God* (says the Apostle, 2 *Thess.* 1. 6. *to render tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you that are troubled rest with us*; There is a sort of Righteousness, in making much Suffering for Christ to be followed with much Glory, so that though the Saints righteousness, be a righteousness of Grace, yet there is somewhat in Gods Righteousness, and equal, or suitable way of dealing, that metes out great Glory, according to great Sufferings for Christ. A 4*th* Priviledge is, more liveliness in Duties, more immediat access to God under the Cross, a great-

all

nearness to him, and greater manifestations of of his comforting presence under Suffering for Christ, then is ordinarly attained unto otherwise; So much is declared by the Apostle, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of God, and of Glory resteth upon you.* A 5*th* Priviledge is, That Sufferers for Christ are someway equalled to the most eminent Saints, Prophets and Apostles, that have gone before them; To this purpose, says our Lord to his Disciples, *Matth.* 5. *v.* 11, 12. *Blessed are ye when men shal revile, and persecute you; for so did they persecut the Prophets that were before you*; And to be dealt with as all the great men of God, and the Prophets before us were, and to be put in the same rank, roll, and catalogue with them, is no small Priviledge, nor is it any little honour, for such poor creatures as we are, to be thus highly ranked, and classed. There is a 3*d* thing that confirmeth, and presseth the Point, and that is, the Fountain whence this willing taking up, and chearful bearing of Christs Cross flowes, which is, the believing contemplation, and consideration of the Love of God in Christ, of the faithfulness of his Promise, and Covenant, and of his tender Fatherly care, and pity towards his Children; *Ye have forgotten,* (saith the Apostle) *Heb.* 12. 5. *the exhortation that speaks to you, as to Children; My son, despise not thou the chastning of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him.* (Importing, that they had forgotten the nature of affliction, and of the relation that they stood in to God, when they fainted under the Cross,) *For whom the Lord loveth, he correcteth,*

and

and chastneth every son whom he receiveth, and if ye indure chastisments, ye are dealt with as Sons, &c. As if he had said, Gods chastning puts this honour upon you in that, as it flowes from his special Love, so it declares you to be his Sons; all your chastisements are effects of his Fatherly Love to you, and of his tender care of you, and by this Character he differenceth you from bastards.

The *First use* serves, to exhort, stir up, and provock all Christs Followers, sweerly to take on, and chearfully to bear the Cross of Christ, when he calls to it, and layes it on; *we would rejoyce, and be exceeding glad,* and *count it all joy; we would rejoyce, in as much as we are made partakers of the sufferings of Christ,* as our Lord, and his Apostles *James* and *Peter* from him exhorts us: Ah! how far are we removed from this in our practice? we should *glory in tribulation, and glorifie God in the fires,* yea, should make our Cross for Christ a great ground of our chearfulness and joy; not that we would have Christians either to be rash and hastie in drawing on Suffering on themselves, even in a good cause, or to be carnal, vain, conceity and proud under it; but when the Lord calls us to it, we would readily stoup to take on his Cross, and carry it handsomly and chearfully, that we may commend, and give a good word to the Cross of Christ to others, that they may know the exhortations to Sufferings this way, and the promise made to honest Sufferers are not in vain, that they may be incouraged to adventure on Suffering for Christ when he calls to it, in hope of being made, to experi-

perience, somewhat of the same allowance for
eir honourable through-bearing.

The 2*d. use* serves to reprove, not only our
suitable shifting of the Cross, but also our
avie and heartless bearing of it, when God
yes it on; It may be, when we cannot possibly
t it shifted without gross and palpable guilt,
e will stoup, as it may be, to take it on, but
e unwilling to bear it far, and are ready to
ary greatly of it; It's true (as I said) we
ould not be culpably accessory to the bringing
it on our selves, but when he layes it on, we
ould not shew such aversion from it, neither
ould we account it to be so heavy and uneasie a
oke, nor walk with so much discouragement
nder it, as if it were not the honourable Cross
precious Jesus Christ, and as if there were no
romise of an out-gate from it, nor of assistance
bear it; or, as if our life consisted in the a-
undance of these outward things; this is
rtainly exceeding blame-worthy, and very un-
ecoming the followers of Jesus Christ.

The 3*d use* serves to teach us, not to tye our
omfort to an outward prosperous condition in
he World; nor to be anxious, when our prospe-
ity is turned to adversity; but to labour to be
lear in our Duty, and to walk evenly in follow-
ng of Christ, not being very solicitous what we
ay meet with, in following him; for if we
onsider rightly, we will find, that mens sinful
hifting of the Cross, and their carkingly care-
ull way of walking under it, is that which light-
neth the difficultie of it, and makes it to be-
ome doubly a Cross; whereas, if there were a
hristian resolution before hand to take it on,

and a kindly ſtouping to it, when it comes; would blunt the ſharp edge of the Croſs, lighten it, and make it eaſily portable: Much more might be ſaid, in proſecuting of this *uſe*, which we will not now inſiſt in, only conſider well, and lay due weight on our Lords words, eſpecially when the Croſs is come to our door; *If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, take up his croſs and follow me*; and the Lord himſelf graciouſly inable us to do ſo.

SERMON VII.

Matth. 16. *Verſe* 24. *Then ſaid Jeſus to his diſciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs, and follow me.*

THE buſſineſs of following Chriſt aright, is one of the greateſt, and graveſt, of the moſt concerning and highly momentuous buſſineſſes in the World, in compariſon with which, all others are but buſſineſſes in the By; which our Lord knowing infallibly well, would have all His Diſciples to know it alſo, and to acknowledge it; and therefore inſiſts the more in it, holding forth the indiſpenſable requiſit qualifications of his followers, *viz. That they muſt deny themſelves, and take up their croſs*, which two qualifie, fit, and prompt for the *third*, to wit, *following of him.*

We ſpoke ſomewhat of *taking up the Croſs*, as it holds forth the caſe that Chriſts followers are in, ordinarily in the World, and it is to have the Croſs, ſome one ſad affliction, or another,

where we considered it, as a Duty that they are called to; being commanded to take it up, when they meet with it, not to shift it, but to stoup pleasantly to the taking of it on, and to bear it chearfully after him; Now ere we come to speak of the *uses*, that Christ aims at in all this; we would take notice of that word cast in, not sure by guess, but purposly, *His Cross*; whereby it seems, he puts a difference betwixt the common afflictions of all, and the more particular afflictions of this and that Believer; as if he had said, it is not enough, that Believers should submit to afflictions in common, but they must submit to these particular afflictions that are theirs, or shaped out to them in particular, this, and that, and the other; every Believer hath his own particular affliction, or cross, beside that which is common to all, which he is called to submit unto and take on, Whence *Observe, That these who would follow Christ aright, must not pitch upon wall, or make choice of their own Cross, but submit unto that Cross that is particularly carved out for them, and allotted to them*; Which leads us to touch on these *two* things; one whereof is, that beside the lot which all Believers have in common, under publick calamities, every Believer, and Follower of Christ hath his own Cross, particularly shaped out for him; whether it be a distinct particular Cross, or that which is common and publick but accompanied with some peculiar circumstances, in reference to him; The other is, That the Believer in Jesus Christ, should welcome the Cross, as it is circumstantiated to him, and as it is his particular Cross; we need not speak of the first of these distinctly by it

ſelf, it being obviouſly implyed in the *Second*. Our Lords words are clear to this purpoſe, *Matth.* 23. 4. *Behold, I ſend unto you wiſe men, and Pro-phets, and ſome of them ye ſhal kill, and crucifie ſome of them ye ſhall ſcourge in your Synagogues and perſecute them from city to city*; Where he ſpeaks of ſeveral ſorts of Croſſes, that men approven of God ſhal meet with, and which they muſt take up, and carry after him, as he is pleaſed to carve them out to them; the experience of all the Lords People, in all Ages, and time further clears, and makes it out; there are none of the Saints who have not had *their own Croſs*: there have been ſome, who have been crucified, and killed, ſome ſcourged, and others perſecuted from city to city, *&c. Abel, Abraham, Moſes, David, Job, Jeremiah,* and the reſt had all the Croſs, yet was there ſomething in one's Croſs that was not in anothers; *So Heb.* 11. 36, 37, 38. Where the account of Believers Sufferings is ſummed up, it is ſaid, That *ſome had tryal of cruel mockings, and ſcourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and impriſonment, they were ſtoned, ſawn aſunder*, &c. Some had one ſort of tryal, ſome another, as the wiſdom of God thought meet to allot to them: we need not here deſcend to particulars, ſome are croſſed in the ſpoiling of their Goods, ſome in their Children, ſome have their Children taken from them by Death, ſome have them preſerved alive to be a croſs to them, ſome have croſſes in their own Perſons, ſome in their Families, ſome are under poverty and want, ſome are under reproach and contempt, and ſo forth: If ye would have ſome reaſons of this Point, ye may take theſe ſhortly.

The

The *First* whereof may be drawn from Gods Infinit Wisdom, and absolute Soveraignity, he thinks meet that it should be so; as the Potter hath power over the clay, to put it in what form or shape he will, much more hath he, the great God, who is former of all things, power over his own creatures, to exercise, & handle them as he thinks good; to which purpose there is much excellently discoursed in the Book of *Job*; He thinks fit to exercise one Person this way, and another that way, and who may say to him, what dost thou? he is not bound to give a reason of his actings. 2*ly*. There are some reasons relating to us, and our condition, and to the end that God hath before him, in this variety, which shew, that it is good it should be so: As 1. There must be a suitableness betwixt the Cross and the Person, every Believer is not in a like case, and therefore there is reason, that there be some difference among them, in respect of their Crosses; they have their several Idols, and these require several and suitable Crosses, to bring, and keep them down; as for instance, when ones predominant is Pride, and Self conceit, he readily so disposeth, that contempt and reproach are made to meet such a man, as most suitable to beat down that Idol; If his Idol be covetousness, he can, and oftentimes doth make Riches take wings and flee away, or he cankereth, and imbittereth them, some one way or another; If the Idol be strength of body, he readily by pain, or sickness layes him low, and on his back; or, If the Persons Idol be his Children, (as its very probable *Absalom* was *Davids*) he readily either removes them by

Death, or blasts all expectation conceived
them, so that they become the greatest instru
ments of their trouble and grief; This great an
Infinitely skilful Physician gives not the same Po
tion to all his diseased Patients, but varieth it a
cording to the natureof the disease,and constitut
on of the several Persons. 2ly There must be a suit
ableness betwixt the Cross, and Gods end; if h
end be a tryal of the Person, that will be a try
to one which will not be so to another; and as h
hath several sorts of Persons, so he hath sever
Graces to try; which requires several sorts o
Crosses, Some would think but little of the want
of wealth, if they had their health, therefore h
exercises them with sickness, and infirmitie o
body; others could much submit to the want o
both, but cannot endure to have their name rub
bed on, and he will needs have that to be thei
tryal; if one mans exercise were but just th
same exercise of another, he would think th
less of it: and therefore in reference to all these
It is very suitable and congruous to the Follower
of Christ, that they submit to their own Cross
to the Cross that is carved out to them in partic
ticular; sweetly to submit to the present Cross
and as it is circumstantiated, is the present duty;
therefore our Lord Jesus sayes, *The cup that my
Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* He
hath a cup mixed and prepared to him peculiar
ly, which he takes and drinks out pleasantly;
as it is every Believers duty, not only to resolve
in the general, to take on the Cross, but also to
take on *his cross* in particular, to drink the cup
mixed with such and such ingredients, suited
to

them, and put in their hand, as their tryal. *ly.* There is a suitableness betwixt the Cross, and the good that the Lord intends thereby to the Believer, a suitableness betwixt the Physick and the Disease; the Plaster and the Wound designed to be cured and healed: It is therefore very absurd to think, or say, *any cross but this*, even as absurdly unreasonable, as it would be for a sick man to say, If I had gotten the Pils, or Potion that such another Person got, I could have digested it, would have been the better of it, but I cannot away with this bitter, and very unpleasant one; Whereas the physick that the other Person got, would have done thee no good nor suited to thy Disease; for the good of the Physick lyeth in this, that it is exactly suited to the disease whereof thou art Sick.

The *use* of it Serves to teach us, not to half our submission to the Cross, nor to think a submission to the Cross in general will do the turn; some are ready to say, that they would submit to any thing but this; or, this is a thing that they cannot endure; but if it were not a Cross of that sadly exercising nature, it would not suit your condition; Therefore there would be 1. A submission to the kind of the Cross, and as it is circumstantiated; whether it be a Cross on our Body, Goods, Name, Children, Husband, Wife, &c. Whether it be a Cross that we have more ease under, or a Cross that doth continually trouble us. 2*ly*. There would also be a submission to the time of the coming on of the Cross, or to the time whence it bears date; one will be ready to say, I could submit to this Cross, but its come upon me unseasonably, when as, if all

things were well known, and considered, it would be found to come very seasonably. 3*ly*. There would be submission to the continuance of the Cross and affliction, whether for a day, month or a year, or throughout thy whole lifetime, if it were even from thy youth up, to thy dying day; there must be a submission to Gods terme, day, and date of expiration. 4*ly*. There would be submission to the measure and degree of it, whatever measure or height God is pleased to bring our affliction and Cross unto, it must be submitted to, for it hath probably come to a greater measure, and a higher degree in many of the Saints before us, *who were sawn asunder, stoned, slain with the sword, who wandered about in sheeps-skins, and goats-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented*. *Finally*, There would be submission, as to the Parties or Persons from whom it comes more immediately; Some may think, and will be ready to say, that they could indure a Cross, but think it hard, and intolerable to indure it, from such and such Persons, from such and such Instruments, as from Husband, or Wife, Parent, or Child, Brother, or Sister, Kinsman or Friend, *&c*. But from whomsoever it comes, whether from Friends or Foes, from Countrey-men, or Strangers, from False brethren, or from Heathens, it must be submitted unto; for herein there is nothing strange, and submission, in this respect, is a part of our beautiful conformity, to the great Patern, our blessed Lord Jesus, whose cross, affliction, and tryal it was, to have *Heaven, and Earth, and Hell, the Gentiles, and People of the Jews, and those that did eat bread at his own table*, combyning a-

gain

gainſt him: very readily, and ordinarly, when we dare not fret at the Croſs, in the general, or as to the ſubſtance of it (to ſpeak ſo) we will pitch on ſome circumſtance or particular of it, and carp at that; but it is not right, and ſuitable ſubmiſſion, which is not to the Croſs, as ſo circumſtantiated, and ſuited to our particular condition.

The 2*d uſe* Serves, for tryal of our ſubmiſſion; right and kindly ſubmiſſion is univerſal, and abſolute, and teacheth us to preſent a blank to God, and to allow him to put in, or write down, what Croſs he thinks good, as to the matter, and manner of it, the time of it's coming, the continuance of it, the meaſure or degree, the Parties and Inſtruments from whom, and all the other circumſtances of it.

The 3*d. uſe* Serves, for diſcovery, and reproof; if we examine our ſelves narrowly, and impartially by this, it will be found, that there is much which we account, and call ſubmiſſion, that is not worthy that name; O! how ſadly doth it reprove the practice of many of us, who, if not in whole, yet in part preſume to offer, at the carving out of our own condition, and croſs to God, and do not ſweetly ſubmit to his carving of it out to us; quarrelling Gods wiſdom, as if this and that were not rightly done, reflecting on his skill, as if he had not taken up our diſeaſe aright, or had not ſuited the cure unto it; God hath thought good, not only to afflict *Scotland*, but in ſuch a manner, and meaſure, and by ſuch inſtruments, overturning Church and State, pouring contempt and reproach upon us, at home, and abroad, opening all mouths againſt us, and redacting us to ſlavery and bondage; It is this, that the People of God are called to ſub-

mit unto, in all it's ſad circumſtances, and n
to fret at ſuch a diſpenſation, nor to take up a
prejudice at holineſs, becauſe of it, nor to ſuff
our paſſions ſinfully to riſe againſt inſtrument
and wherein it is otherwiſe with us, we are ce
tainly reproof worthy.

From this, and the former Doctrine, concer
ing chearful bearing the Croſs of Chriſt, ſom
will be ready to *Object*, and ſay, we would n
care to take on any, or to incounter any difficult
if we knew it were Chriſts Croſs; Yea, we wou
think it an honour to ſuffer, if it were on th
account of giving a teſtimony to him; but it
our great doubt, that any Croſs we are unde
cannot be called Chriſts Croſs; and when w
cannot diſcern it to be of that nature, we c
neither have that ſweet peace, in ſubmitting t
it, nor can we with that cheerfulneſs bear it
becomes: To which I *Anſwer*. 1. Chriſts Cro
conſiſts not always in the meaſure of the affli
on that thou indureſt; it may be a part of Chri
Croſs, when it is but a word of reproach, a tau
or mock, that thou ſuffers; Therefore it is ſai
Gal. 4. 29. *He that was born after the fleſh pe
ſecuted him that was born after the ſpirit*, &c. No
it is clear from *Gen.* 21. 9. That this perſecutio
was *Iſhmaels mocking of Iſaac*; and *Heb.* 11. 3
Some of theſe worthies *had tryal of cruel moc
ings*: There is by the way a deceit that woul
be taken heed to here; ſome flatter themſelv
ſo far, as to think that they would lay dow
their life for a Teſtimony to Chriſt, who y
cannot abide a reproach or mock; but is it lik
ly they would ſuffer the loſs of Life for Chri
who cannot indure to be called Hypocrites,
to be reproached, or ill-ſpoken of unjuſtly,
ſed

seditious Persons, and troublers of Israel? But to hold close by our point in hand; even that would be looked upon, as a part of suffering for Christ, and so a part of his Cross; which in the first rise of it is for him, or for something of his work in thee; were it but a mock, or a reproachful word betwixt Man and Wife, Parent and Child, Child and Child, Servant and Servant, Neighbour and Neighbour, when somewhat of God in the Person draws out the reproach, it is a part of Christs Cross. 2*ly*. We would not alwayes limit suffering for Christ to the main, and fundamental things of the Gospel, (for which Christians think, if they were called to suffer, they would be chearful in their Sufferings) but though they be things less thought of, and comparatively of less moment indeed, if it be a point of real Truth, or Dutie, it is Suffering for Christ, when we are called to Suffer on that account; *John* the *Baptist* did not Suffer for the Gospel, or for any great Gospel-Truth strictly taken, but for a reproof given to *Herod*, for saying, *that it was not lawful for him to have his brothers wife*, for bearing witnes to a point of truth concerning what was moral; and yet doubtless he was a sharer of Christs Sufferings in that particular; There is not in some respect, a more and a less in the matter of Duty, and in the matter of Truth, or in respect of Suffering on the account of, or for Truth; but if it be indeed Duty, or Truth, it is to be Suffered for, and is as well approven of God, and hath a comfortable Out gate, as well as Suffering for that, which simply considered, is of far greater moment, and this comparatively but of little; This is clear in the example of *Moses* who

who would not leave *a hoove* behind him; *Daniel*, who would not shut his windows; and in *Mordecai*, who would not bow the knee to *Haman*; all which many would have thought were little to be stuck at, and far less to hazard all on; yet having found these things to be Duties which they were in Conscience oblidged, they discerned no such distinction in the command of God, betwixt less and more, in the matter of Duty, so as to allow them to abandon, and deny the lesser more than the greater; nothing is too little to suffer for, that God has commanded. 3*ly*. It is not only Christs Cross, when we Suffer immediately for duty to him; but also, when we Suffer for Duty to men, if it be commanded by him; Suffering for a Duty of the *Second* Table of the *Law*, is Suffering for Christ, as well as Suffering for Duties of the *First* Table; and not, as many think, that it is only Suffering for Christ, when it relates to Duties of the first Table; A Christian Child, no doubt, may Suffer, for performing, or for not neglecting Duties to his Father, and so for Christ; and the Apostle speaking to Christian Servants, 1 *Pet.* 2. 19. Tells them, *If ye indure grief, suffering wrongfullie, for conscience towards God, it is thankworthie*, and *Chap.* 3. 14. He sayes to all, *If ye suffer for righteousnes sake, happy are ye*; Whatever be a mans Dutie, it hath the promise of happines, whether it be a Dutie relating to the *First*, or to the *Second* Table, when he Suffers for it; and so it's suffering some way for Christ. 4*ly*. We would not limit Suffering for Christ to a direct Suffering for him, as when the quarrel, opposition, or persecution is stated down-right on his account, or for his sake; for there is an indirect

Suffering

suffering for Christ, as when men are so assumed to afflict, or persecute directly and expresly for Christs sake, or for any thing of Christ, that appears in such a Person, or Persons, they pretend some other ground of quarrel, but still from a secret Heart-pique and prejudice at somewhat of Christ in them; as it may be, they will call them seditious, unclean, intemperat, and the like, and under that disguise put upon them, persecute them, blast their reputation, and defame them; while in the mean time, the true & principal, if not the alone ground of the quarrel is, a malicious hatred of somewhat (as I said) of God discovered to be in the Person or Persons, and not hatred of the sin, wherewith they reproach them; otherwise they would hate that sin in themselves and in others, which yet they do not; a plain evidence, that the Persons either supposed, or real Sin, is not the ground of the quarrel, however pretended, but that they reproach them with it on a malicious design, thereby to obscure, and cry down the good that is in them; such men will not readily say, this or that man is a godly man, and therefore he must suffer, but he is this, and that and the other odious thing, and therefore away with him, he is not worthy to live, as they said of *Jeremiah*; and how often were the Apostles persecuted under the false pretext of their being turners of the World upside-down? and that horrid and hellish things were most falsly charged by persecuting *Pagans*, on the Primitive Christians, that under that disguise they might the more freely persecute them? yet all these were for Christ, &c. We would not limit sufferings for Christ, to things simply lawfull, or unlawfull, for it may be, sometimes for things

things indifferent in their own nature, which
being so and so circumstantiated to us, may dra
on Suffering; and these Sufferings may be Suffe
lings for Christ; a thing may be indifferent, a
lawfull to some, which to others stated unde
such and such circumstances may be accounted
receding from some part of a just Testimony,
a refusing to give a Testimony; even though th
matter be not (as I said) such in it self, an
in it's own nature, yet it may be so circumsta
tiated to some Persons, as it may be lyable to th
construction, if they shall recede from, or for
bear it; as in the example of *Daniel*, who su
fers for opening his windows, which was a thin
indifferent in it self, & not essential to his wo
shiping of God; but having used to open his wi
dows, and pray towards *Jerusalem* before, an
now being brought on the Stage, and a Decre
having gone forth from the King, that none
should put up a Petition to any God or man, bu
to the King only, for so many dayes, he find
himself bound in Conscience, and that on ver
just ground, to do as he had wont to do before,
and that on the manifest hazard of his life, leas
his malicious enemies should have it to say, tha
he receded from his Duty, and that he thought
more shame now, or was more afraid now, than
before to worship the true God. *6ly.* We
would not limit Sufferings for Christ, to wrongs
and injuries that come at us mediatly, by evil
men, as the instruments; for the Cross may
sometimes come immediately from the hand of
God, as Pain, Sickness, Scarcity, Want, *&c.*
may come that way, and we can blame no in-
struments for them, and they may be casual and
accidental, as to us (though nothing be so in re-
spect

pect of Divine Providence) yet even these may be Sufferings for Christ, though not in respect of the matter, yet in respect of the manner, *viz.* When they are christianly submitted to, and patiently born, with respect to Christs honour, and the Soveraignity of God, which so overaweth, and keepeth down our Corruption, that we dar not fret nor repine under Gods hand; when ordinary Crosses are thus born, they come in amongst the Sufferings for Christ; Therefore *Paul* reckoning up his Sufferings, 2 *Cor.* 11. He brings in his Ship-wracks, and other Crosses in his voyages by Sea, in the prosecution of his calling, his hunger, and thirst, *&c.* So that, even in these, Christains may come in to share of the consolation that flows from patient bearing of the Cross, and have them reckoned to them as Crosses for Christ in some respect, because the same principle of Love that puts them to bear the Cross, that comes on them directly for Christ, and the Gospels sake, makes them bear these other Afflictions, and they walk by the same Rule, and have the same End before them in them, that they have under direct and more proper Sufferings for Christ; therefore they may some way partake of the same name; and when Scripture speaks of the Crosses of Gods People, and of their being chastened every morning, it secludes not this immediat sort of Suffering from Gods own hand, more than that which is mediat, by the intervention of Instruments, from coming into the account, and reckoning of Sufferings for Christ; which is not a little comfortable.

But 2*dly*. Some will *Object*, and say, we would have peace, if we knew when we are called to Suffer for Christ, but we know not when or whether

whether we be called in this, and that par-
cular to Suffer; this is an Objection that useth t
be made, and a question that uses to be move
and debated, more especially, by such as hav
no great mind to Suffer; If it be *asked* then
when are Christians called to Suffer? We *A*
swer, It Is beside our scope and design, nor is i
easie, if at all possible to assign particular, an
exact Rules of tryal and direction in all the emer
gent cases, wherein Christians may be called t
Suffer; These being so very many, and so vari
ous, there being withall so much need o singl
ness, impartiality, and Self denyal in th: appli
cation even of general Rules, yet we shall touch
on some general instances of Cases wherein we
are called to Suffer, as namely, *First*. When
we cannot keep by our Duty, and eschew Suffer-
ing, but by taking our selves to some sinfull
midse; I mean of whatever nature the Duty
be, and of whatever nature the sin be, when the
midse is sinfull; it will, I suppose, be granted
by all, that we are bound to prefer Suffering to
sin. 2*ly*. When the midse is not only directly
sinfull, but when we cannot eschew Suffering,
but sinfullie, we are called, in that Case to Suf-
fer, for the mean may be lawfull in it self, and
yet so circumstantiated, that to us it may be sinful;
as a man may, through want of present light be
doubtfull, whether or not he may use such and
such a mean to eschew Suffering, and he is not
wilfully cherishing his ignorance; only he know-
eth not for the time, whether it be lawful for him
or not, to use such a mean, if he shouldin that case,
do such a thing, he should do it doubtingly, &
so sinfully; and till God give more clearness,
it is better for such a man to hazard on Suffer-
ing

ing; for if in that case, he use the mean, or do the thing, he will do it sinfully; though in it self, and it may be to another, it be not sinful. 3*ly*. When we cannot without sin, eschew some manifest prejudice to the work of God, or some notable reproach on his People, even though the mean be lawful in it self, we are called in that case, rather to Suffer, for though the mean be lawfull, yet if it should be used by us, it is very probable, it would derogat from, and reflect upon our profession, and be matter of stumbling to the People of God, and minister occasion to adversaries, to insult or speak ill; as for Instance, it was not simply unlawful, or sinfull, for *Nehemiah* to flee to save his life, yet he says, *should such a man as he flee?* He finds on due consideration, that for such a man, in such a place, and so stated to flee, would have been a reproach to his profession, and would have stumbled many; therefore he judges it unsuitable to redeem his life at the too dear rate of such a reproach, and that he is called rather to hazard on Suffering: men would not be vain, and carnal in seeking to maintain their own credit, in a suffering time; yet they would concernedly see to the credit of the Gospel, and of their profession; and it is on this ground, that *Paul* goes in many of his Sufferings, that by his Sufferings others may be strengthned, edified and confirmed, and made more bold, and no wayes prejudiced, and the mouths of adversaries stopped, that were ready to take advantage, and speak evil; and to come by these ends, he rejoyced in Sufferings. A 4*th*. Case is, when our doing of such and such a thing hath a longer train

train of consequents following it, than the
is any great matter in the thing it self, whi
may give advantage to the enemy, or may bri
prejudice to Gods Work, or to his People, we
called, in that case, rather to forbear, and ha
ard on Suffering; as for example, it was but
little thing in it self, for *Daniel* to shut the wi
dows, and for *Mordecai* to bow before *Hama*
But when either of these is considered, with th
train that followed on it; whilest thereby it
attempted, to beat them from their stedfastne
their yielding to such a thing, would have giv
occasion of boasting, rejoycing, and triumph
the enemy, and of sorrow and sadness to th
People of God, and might seem to be a recedi
from a called for Testimony; and upon these con
derations they find themselves concerned &clea
ly called, rather to hazard on Suffering, than
do such a thing, which in other cases migh
have been done: This Case, as also the forme
call for much Holy Wisdom, Prudence, an
Self-denyal, and much Light and Direction fro
God; and I have instanced them for this caus
that we may not think, that we are not calle
to Suffer, when the thing is little, or such
in other Cases, or in other Circumstances migh
be done; It is true, the thing may be little con
sidered simply, and in it self, and if there wer
no more following on it, is such as might b
done; but when we see it is designed, and mad
use of to be, as it were, a needle to draw with
a long threed of consequences, and to bear an
blind upon us such things, that in Conscience we
cannot comply with, nor allow of; we are no
in that case to consider, and weigh the thing,
abstracted

fracted from, and divested of the consequents
the circumstances thereof, but as it is attend-
whi by, and cloathed with them; we shall not
y bri tance any more particular Cases: but earnest-
we b beseech every one gravely to perpend, and
d h nder these, as they shall find themselves in
but ch and such circumstances to be concerned,
e wh d always to remember, that it's better *to*
amu ose to suffer affliction than sin, or the pleasures
th t *it, which indure but for a season.*
y it *ly.* From Christs requiring, that the Cross
ftne y be taken up, and born, as it leads unto,
giv d furthers, in the following of him, and as
ph fits and prompts, for following of him, *Ob-*
to t *ve,* In a Word (for we hasten to a close)
ed l *at suffering of it self, never profiteth, or ad-*
con *antageth men in the way of holiness, nor is it ac-*
clea *ptable to Christ; but only as it fits for follow-*
un *g of him, and furthers us therein;* For Crosses
igh d Afflictions are common to good and bad;
me d that which makes crosses and afflictions ac-
an ptable to him, and profitable, comfortable,
fro d lovely to Believers, is this, that they are
ruse lessed towards their furtherance, in following
lle him, towards their advances in conformity to
h m, and communion with him:

igh For *use,* Take this as the great Scope, and
con pshot of Sufferings, and take it also for a mark,
ver try right Suffering by; It is not the mea-
b re of Suffering, but Suffering, as it hath this
ad weet fruit growing on it, even progress in like-
h ness to Christ, in holiness, and in fellowship
ind with him, that makes it pleasing to God on
we Christs account, and profitable to us; and in-
no deed it may make a very sad and humbling dis-
covery of our present condition, as to most of
ed

us

us; our Sufferings have not been few, and have met with several sad dispensations; alas! how little have they participat of the ture of the Cross of Christ? It's true, in respe the material cause of them they have been for yet in so far as few are bettered, & further holiness by them, and made to run after him, in way of his Commandments; we may sadly say, t hath been but little, lamentably little Suffering Christ: we have much reason to fear, that a have many things to count for, in reference greatly abused glorious Gospel, so his in particu abused Crosses & Afflictions; he hath smitten and we have not suitably grieved, neither have turned to the hand that smote us; ah! what pro ing is there in respect of the inward mortificat of Sin, and of delight in God; or in respect of a sible holy, and examplary conversation becom the Gospel of Christ, by all our Sufferings? Is th not, beside these great defects, as to the power godliness, some wearing out of the very form of that had wont to be? abused Crosses may b very sad article in our Libel and Indirement; a when we grow not better by Crosses, we read grow worse.

3ly. From our Lords requiring from all that w come after him, the taking up, and bearing of h Cross, as it fits following of him *Observe, That t right taking up and bearing of the Cross, notably qu lifies and fits men for following of Christ*; Therefo doth he here propose it, as a fit & suitable midle, f coming at that end; It is not the Cross considere simply, and in it self (as I said) that fits for follow ing of Christ, but the kindly submitting to, & bear ing of it, that hath this blessed fruit & effect; *La*

It is good for a man (saith *Jeremiah*) *that he bear the yock in his youth, he sits alone, & keeps silence*. Kindly submitting to the Cross, makes humble & patient, & suffers not the afflicted man to fret, or to prescribe to God; many take on the Cross, but do not (to speak so) bear it; and many bear it when it is in a manner so bound on them, that they cannot get it shaken off; who yet fret, repine and grumble under, & greatly weary of it, as an intolerable burden; but this kindly bearing of it, makes silent & sweetly submissive, of the afflicted persons own accord; *If ye indure chastening* (sayeth the Apostle, *Heb.* 12. 7.) *God dealeth with you, as with Sons*; This genuine & kindly exercise under the Cross, bespeaks a clearing and comforting evidence of *Son*-ship.

The *use* of it serves, in short to discover to us the great let & obstruction that lyeth in the way of our ready, resolute & chearful following of Christ when our not being folding, yielding, toward, and tractable to the Lord, by the Cross, but much inclining either to shift, or shake it off; either to fret under it, or at best preposterously to seek after a change of it; of what ever nature it be, whether a share of that which is more common & publick, or somwhatmore particular, & domestick or personal; we should have it for our great work and task, to bear, and by bearing, to be benefited and bettered by our Cross; to be alwayes in a posture of readiness to Suffer, which will lay our pride, & keep down our easily discomposing and distempering passions, it would contribute to the grouth of Grace, and would through Gods blessing, be as a weeding-iron to draw up the weeds of corruption from among the herbs, and would make them

die,

dle, which alas! often grow ranker than herbs;
Cross rightly born would, in a word, notably
to follow Christ.

4*ly*. *Observe*, but in a short word, *That there*
no following of Christ aright, unless we resolve
take up and bear patiently, and pleasantly our
particular Crosses shaped to us; If any man (saveth
Lord here) *will come after me, let him take up his*
and follow me; The way of following of Christ, is
hedged as it were, with thorns, that through many
Tribulations & Afflictions all that will follow him
must needs enter into the Kingdom of God; and
the Christian race, and course of Godliness hath
many enemies on all hands, and from all quarters
that the man who resolves not to suffer for Christ
will make no progress in it; There is nothing more
frequently proposed unto, and pressed upon
the professt followers of Christ than this; and it
here laid down by him, as one of the first, & great
articles of his capitulation (to speak so) with
that will come after him; the necessity whereof
powerfully pressed, and put home by all the
weighty arguments which follow our *Text*, to the
close of the *Chapter*, which are all linked together
ther with this, that *if any man will come after*
Christ, he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow
him; who is infinitly worthy to be followed,
lowed, notwithstanding all the Crosses that attend
and follow his followers, while they sojourn
journ in this present evil, sinfull and troublesome
some World, out of which, when they shall
be gone, they will exchange their *Cross* for
an incorruptible Crown.

FINIS.

THE GREAT GAIN OF CONTENTING GODLINESS

Commended in Four SERMONS, By Maſter *JAMES DURHAM*;

To which is prefixed a Preface upon the ſame Subject, By Mr. *JOHN CARSTAIRS*;

Both late eminent Miniſters of the Goſpel in the City of *GLASGOW*.

EDINBURGH,
Printed by the *Heir* of *Andrew Anderſon* Printer to the King's moſt excellent *Majeſty*,
ANNO DOM. 1685.